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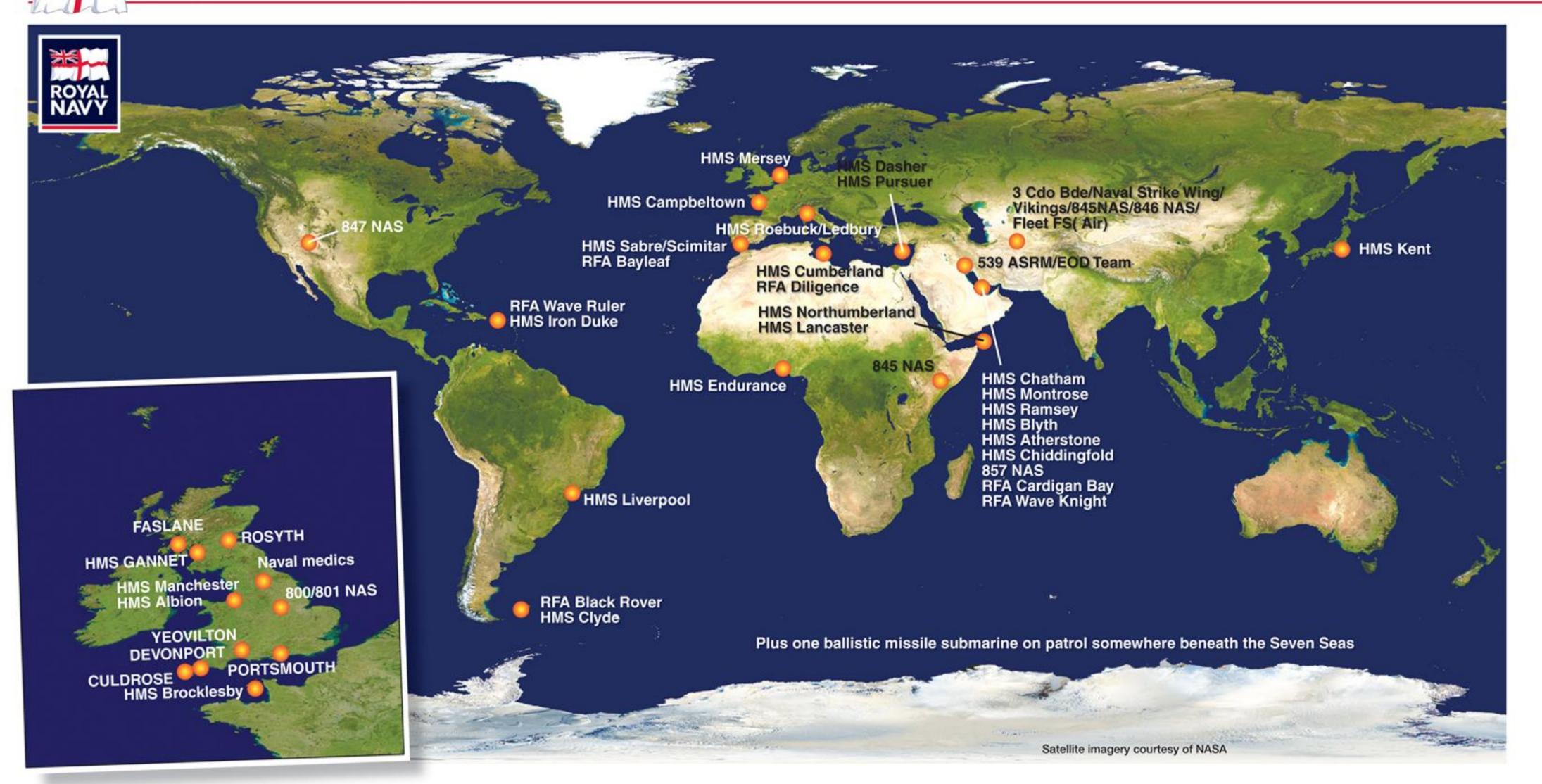
OCTOBER 2008

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Turn and burn... HMS Iron Duke rushes to the rescue of the hurricane-ravaged Turks and Caicos Islands. See page 3 for the full story.

Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, FRPU East





GLOBAL turbulence has dominated the media headlines this past month - and not just in the financial sector.

For a good fortnight Hurricanes Gustav and Ike surpassed even the 'credit crunch' on news bulletins. And where there's a tropical storm, there's never a Royal Navy warship far away.

Two in this case, HMS Iron Duke and her supporting tanker RFA Wave Ruler, who've been chasing first Gustav, then Ike, to offer what assistance they could in the storms' wake (see

opposite). The effects of Nature's wrath in the Caribbean are immediately evident. Her effects in West Africa, caused by climate change and other environmental factors, are less so - but equally devastating in the long term. HMS Endurance has visited Ghana and Sierra Leone to highlight the importance of looking after the

countries' delicate environment (see page 8). Harnessing the environment, in this instance the Helmand River, is key to the British mission in Afghanistan. UK forces safely transported a hydro-electric turbine to Kajaki Dam in the face of insurgent activity, using the Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing as their aerial umbrella (see page 4).

The naval aviators have been in Helmand for a little over a month - far less time than the specialist helicopter engineers of Fleet Forward Support (Air) - a small, unsung and invaluable team whose work is championed on pages 18-19.

The aviators and engineers are now being joined in Afghanistan by the first elements of 3 Commando Brigade, including the Hospital Squadron; the latter prepared for some of the challenges they face at Camp Bastion with an authentic exercise in Yorkshire (see right).

Not all the Corps is deploying to Helmand this winter. The marines need to maintain their amphibious capability, something they do thanks in no small measure to the team at Instow, 11 Amphibious Trials and Training. We take a look behind (and beneath) the scenes (see centre pages).

The dynamic duo attached to NATO's minehunting force, mother ship HMS Roebuck and HMS Ledbury, have been exercising in Italian waters, alongside the rest of the international force (see page 10).

The pair will are taking part in Exercise Noble Midas - as is HMS Cumberland, which is spending the autumn with a different NATO group (see page 7).

Surprisingly, it's been more than five years since a Royal Navy warship sailed into Umm Qasr. Mine countermeasures vessels Blyth and Atherstone navigated the Khawr abd Allah to step up training with the Iraqi Navy (see page 7).

The Red Rose - HMS Lancaster - is now east of Suez after a fairly swift passage through the Med (see page 6).

She'll be joined in the Indian Ocean by HMS Northumberland - who's also visiting the Falklands and Pacific on an eclectic six-

month deployment (see page 5).
Farther east, HMS Kent has been in Tokyo celebrating the 150th anniversary of Anglo-Japanese co-operation (see pages 14-15).

High summer normally means a tailing-off of RN activity as the Fleet comes home for leave. But the ports and coastal towns of the British Isles have been awash with warships: inter alia HMS Argyll took part in Dartmouth Regatta (see page 20), Albion and Manchester visited Liverpool (see pages 5 and 7 respectively), Brocklesby popped across to Alderney (see page 6), and HMS Campbeltown has been in her namesake town after calling in at

St Nazaire (see page 4). Venerable destroyer HMS Exeter has returned from possibly her last deployment - Russia, Norway and Iceland - to a spirited welcome in Portsmouth (see page 7).

And also home - after a lengthier spell away - is aviation training ship RFA Argus, which marked her 20th birthday supporting the Allied effort in the Middle East (see page 13).

Talking of birthdays... HMS Clyde has celebrated her first in the Falklands. She's our ship of the month (see page 12).

Fleet Focus Medics taste MASH

TWO hundred Senior Service medics, nurses and surgeons were subjected to the horrors of war - before they even got to Afghanistan.

The medics headed to Yorkshire for the improbably-named Exercise Rosedale Ready, the final test for the team of RN/RM medical personnel before they take charge of the field hospital at Camp Bastion, the hub of British operations in Helmand.

3 Commando Brigade led a final 'battle rehearsal' on Salisbury Plain in July.

And although medics were involved in the sprawling exercise, there was nothing on offer quite as specific as the 'workout' provided by the Army Medical Services Training Centre near

It is to medics what Bull Point in Plymouth is to matelots: a semirealistic disaster environment.

Bull Point replicates the impact of hurricanes and earthquakes on island communities.

The AMSTC – a large hangar turned into a field hospital - mirrors medical facilities at Camp Bastion... as does the casualties it receives.

To ensure training is as authentic as possible, amputees provide the realism of troops who have lost limbs in bomb blasts - complete with bloody

make-up. There's also a mock-up of a Chinook helicopter: rather than 'simply' dealing with casualties in the field hospital, the training facility is intended to give medical personnel the full Bastion experience - and that means moving patients from the helicopter through the base to the hospital.

As we've featured in these pages before, the medics don't purely look after British personnel in theatre: they often have to aid locals wounded by Taleban attacks.

So there were also civilian casualties to cope with in York, plus Afghan interpreters to help the medical teams.

"The troops will get top-class medical care delivered by highlytrained medical experts," said Lt Cdr Ali Hofman, Officer Commanding the Hospital Squadron - which has now deployed to Helmand.

"We will be working out of a state-ofthe-art hospital and although there will be challenges, we will all be providing the troops with world-class support."

 A medic tends to a bloody 'casualty' during the exercise

Picture: LA(Phot) 'Knotty' Knott, FRPU East







Riders on the storm

TWICE in a week was man reminded of his impotence in the the face of Mother Nature's merciless fury.

And twice in the space of a week did British sailors bring aid - and hope - to battered island communities as first Hurricane Gustav then Ike tore through the Caribbean before venting their wrath on mainland USA.

The world's media - and, to be fair, the emergency services were all geared up for Gustav bludgeoning its way through New Orleans much as Katrina did three years before with devastating consequences.

It did not. But Gustav was far from a damp squib, as communities across the Caribbean will testify.

Frigate HMS Iron Duke and tanker RFA Wave Ruler - both in the region on anti-drug patrols - hung on to Gustav's coat tails,

remaining 24 hours behind the hurricane, waiting to offer assistance to islands struck by the storm.

Those included the Caymans - mercifully not exposed to the full force of Gustav, but was still battered by winds which topped 100mph.

> The frigate arrived off the islands the morning after the hurricane struck and immediately took the district commissioner up in the ship's Lynx to survey the damage.

That flight - and the photographic data it collected - allowed the ship and the commissioner to assess what aid would be needed.

It was followed by a similar recce of Little Cayman and Cayman Brac with the islands' governor, Stuart Jack, aboard the Lynx.

He left assured that progress was being made in clearing up - and assured that if a more

potent storm struck, considerable assistance from the RN-RFA duo would be on hand almost immediately.

Even as Gustav was still barrelling northwards, a more potent storm - Ike - was brewing. Ike 'enjoyed', if that's the word, considerably more media attention

than its predecessor. It proved to be considerably "Ike hit Grand Turk very more devastating too, certainly for hard." the people of

the Turks and

Caicos Islands. The ill-fated chain had already been lashed by Hurricane Hanna, which did little damage, but did

flood some of the landscape. Ike was less forgiving - but at least some good fortune was on the side of islanders.

Just a fortnight before Ike struck, Iron Duke had been in the Turks and Caicos. The subject? Disaster relief in the event of a hurricane.

So, broadly speaking, the island

knew what to expect from the Navy... and the Navy knew what to expect from locals should a hurricane strike.

Which it did. Ike smashed into the island chain with winds of up to 135mph ravaging buildings. As soon as the hurricane had

passed, an eight-man team was landed by Iron Duke initially to assess the damage.

"Ike hit Turk Grand very hard," said - Lt Cdr Dean Bassett Iron Duke's Executive Officer, Lt Cdr Dean Bassett, one

> of the first sailors ashore – barely ten hours after the storm struck. "All areas were without electricity and most areas without running water or food."

> As in the Cayman Islands, the ship sent her Lynx aloft to gather information about the extent of the devastation. The results of the recce flight

were sobering in the extreme.

"About 85 per cent of all houses

on Grand Turk had severe damage of some kind – either completely destroyed or the roof had been removed," said Iron Duke's CO Cdr Mark Newland.

"The scene was complete

devastation in our eyes and we're not experts at this." Not experts perhaps,

but the RN and RFA are masters of improvisation and 'can do'. As proved by Grand

Turk's hospital. Within three hours of the first sailors arriving, once ward was fit for use one more and patients and staff were enjoying warm meal.

Further afield, the 815 NAS Lynx was ferrying food and clean water to isolated communities, while a team from Iron Duke cleared the runway at the island's airport to allow aid flights to arrive.

For three days the sailors toiled. They put up temporary roofs. They handed out bottled water. They restored power to Grand Turk's reverse osmosis plants, source of the island's fresh water. They restored power to the health clinic. And all the while the Lynx

> buzzed around, ferrying fuel, food and water to the outlying islands. "We made significant

progress," said Cdr Newland. "Water, food and

shelter were all at a satisfactory - and sustainable - level. "The mood in our

group was buoyant. I'm exceptionally proud of both ships' companies." Hurricanes passed, the two

ships resumed their counter-drugs operations, and joined the Dutch frigate HNLMS Van Speijk for exercises.

 Cometh the wrath of God... (Below) sailors grapple with the devastation caused by Ike in Grand Turk



IRON DUKE





Twice in two months for Somerset

THERE'S a double dose of Somerset in her native county this autumn.

Several members of the ship's company left the frigate behind in Devonport and headed east to catch up with affiliates: the Royal British Legion and Baytree School in Weston-super-Mare, the Mayor of Wells and Sea Cadet units in Glastonbury and Weston-super-Mare.

They hadn't seen the sailors, led by Commanding Officer Cdr Rob Wilson, for some time: the Type 23 spent more than seven months away this year with NATO in the Mediterranean.

Having left the ship behind last month, the ship's company will be bringing it with them on their second visit.

The ship will serve as the host for the launch of the Royal British Legion's annual poppy appeal when she visits Avonmouth on October 29.

For Somerset folk who have not had or will not have the chance to see the ship or her men and women in person, they have been at least able to hear about the frigate's exploits.

Tony Smedley of Taunton Hospital Radio visited the ship to record a special edition of his weekend request programme.

The show, broadcast to patients in Taunton's Musgrove Park Hospital (and also on the Apple AM website), featured a Desert Island Discs-style interview with Cdr Wilson and input from the rest of his ship's company.

RN suffering 'locust years'

SOME of the leading figures in naval circles agree that today's – and tomorrow's – Senior Service is "grievously weakened" by years of underfunding.

Former First Sea Lords
Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian
Oswald and Admiral Sir Jock
Slater and ex-Commander-inChief Fleet Sir John Treacher,
plus counterparts from the
Army and RAF, have all put
their names to a report by
the UK National Defence
Association.

The group was formed to campaign for improved funding for Britain's military. It believes the Forces have not been so starved of money since the 'locust years' of the 1930s.

The RN is roughly half the size it was in 1982, yet it has been involved in five conflicts in the past decade – Kosovo, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq – while the UK depends more than ever on seaborne trade.

The report – Overcoming the Defence Crisis – says money must be pumped into modernising the RFA, provision of replacement Type 22/23 frigates, a stronger Fleet submarine force, as well as recruitment and retention.

"Our very existence depends on being able to defend our home waters and our sea lines of communication around the world, yet our Navy has been grievously weakened," the association warns.

Whitehall contends many of the claims and demands made by the report.

"The defence budget is experiencing its longest period of sustained real growth for over 30 years," said an MOD spokesman.

"Additional Treasury funding allows us to deliver urgent and cutting-edge equipment to theatre.

"Our Armed Forces are currently working very hard, continuously displaying the professionalism, bravery and excellence that make them the best in the world."



A Naval Strike Wing Harrier high above the waters of the Kajaki Lake during Operation Oqab Tsuka...

The good shepherds

NAVAL jets were the angels on the shoulders of British forces involved in the nation's most important mission yet in Afghanistan.

Two years after Royal Marines seized the Kajaki Dam on the Helmand River, a large convoy was dispatched from Kandahar to deliver a huge turbine for the dam's hydro-electric power station.

Operation Oqab Tsuka (Pashtu for 'eagle's summit') was central to the British aim of bringing stability back to Helmand – and above all power to support the region's inhabitants and their economy.

The turbine components were flown into Kandahar, the aerial hub of all Allied operations in southern Afghanistan.

But the only way of transporting it to Kajaki was by road (or in many cases dirt track), in a convoy (or, more properly, combat logistic patrol) of more than 80 vehicles, trundling slowly through Helmand – and through terrain where insurgents were known to be operating.

That meant air power as well as ground power was needed to shepherd the slow-moving convoy to its destination – Apache gunships, Chinooks and Harrier GR7s and GR9s of the Naval Strike Wing.

Six Harriers were ready at any one time to support the turbine move. The jets reconnoitred the route before the convoy set off, provided an 'umbrella' over the heads of the vehicles, and acted as a reassuring presence for the troops escorting the turbine.

It took several days for the column to reach Kajaki – with air-to-air refuelling helping to sustain the Harriers.

The turbine move did attract the attention of the insurgents, but a shield of Allied troops fanned out at the side of the column to protect the vital piece of machinery.

"For some maintainers, this was the first experience of witnessing jets returning somewhat lighter than they had taken off," said Cdr Kev Seymour, Naval Strike Wing Commanding Officer.

"The adrenalin rush of



...And returning past the snow-covered peaks of Afghanistan

refuelling, re-arming and preparing the jets to go again reminded them of just why we're here."

Naval aviators are just over a month into their third tour of duty with their bomber variants of the Harrier.

The turbine move was the most high-profile British action in Helmand in months – and among the final acts under the tutelage of 16 Air Assault Brigade.

The soldiers are now on their

The soldiers are now on their way home and the diverse task force that is 3 Commando Brigade is knuckling down at the start of its six months in theatre.

For the initial stretch of that tour of duty, the Naval Strike Wing will provide key aerial support to the green berets (Fleet Air Arm and RAF Harrier crews take it in fourmonthly turns in Afghanistan).

Whether it's Army or Royal Marines running operations, the pace of life in Kandahar for air and ground crew alike is punishing.

The working day begins, obviously, at 11pm (that's GMT, it's actually 3.30am the following day in Afghanistan...) with the watch handover.

Each 'shift' begins with a roundup of issues – weather, engineering status of the Harriers, enemy activity, ground forces activity.

This is just the opening gambit of the planning for every mission.

It normally takes around seven hours to draw up all the information – charts, intelligence picture, data – for each Naval Strike Wing mission (although Harriers also wait on the standings ready to take off in a flash if the scramble

bell sounds).

Seven hours is a long time to wait before clambering into the cockpit, so grabbing some grub is a good idea.

We would not, of course, be so bold as to say the Naval Strike Wing want for nothing (alcohol, for a start, is banned), but facilities are pretty comprehensive at Kandahar.

There's a Subway, Pizza Hut, Burger King and, most beloved of all by the fliers, Tim Hortons.

"When morale is low, or you are having a bad day, get yourself down to Timmy's," says AET 'Archie' Gemmell.

The Navy News team were a little sceptical: what sort of establishment could Timmy's be?

Well, it's a coffee and doughnut shop-cum-cafe (*Phew - Ed*) whose "ice caps and doughnuts can't be beaten," says Archie.

Thankfully, there are three gyms (to work off the doughnuts evidently), a NAAFI and its US equivalent, PX, for those little (or big) treats.

But you don't need money to

create a little slice of home.

In Alan Titchmarsh-fashion, the naval aviators have created a fenced garden (with bird table, kennel and benches).

"Don't let me mislead people," says AET Christopher Peart. "Between the coffee and pizzas, sunbathing and snake-wrangling – we do work.

"With regular missions, scheduled maintenance and dayto-day events, things can quickly heat up."

Indeed it can. For alongside the busy daily routine of planned missions, there are also unplanned missions – war, unsurprisingly, never runs to timetables...

Several aircraft wait on the tarmac, assigned with their engineers and pilots to GCAS – Ground Close Air Support. When the GCAS bell sounds, as the sign next to it imparts: run like hell.

In true Battle of Britain fashion, the pilots dash for their aircraft and head off to provide urgent support for ground troops caught in a spot of bother.

Excluding such spur-of-themoment crises, the day normally ends at noon – 4.30pm local time – as the afternoon shift take over... and the exhausted fliers and ground crew head for Timmy's or for 'home'.

Accommodation is, says Archie, "better than that of 'Cell Block' Freeby back at Cottesmore."

The air-conditioned cabins also have a lovely vista: the airfield blast wall.

Still, life for the 'Kandaharees' is rather better than it is for those just passing through the air base.

Accommodation for those on RSOI (deep breath – Reception, Staging, Onward-movement and Integration) is, shall we say, rudimentary: a big tent crammed with beds which warms up nicely in the Afghan sun.

And talking of the

environment...

"It's not too bad out here once you get past the six inches of dust on everything, poisonous snakes and football-sized spiders – and who could forget the constant chance of a rocket attack," explains AET Peart.

■ You can follow the day-to-day lives of the Naval Strike Wing via their blog at www.royal-navy. mod.uk/server/show/nav.7075

Whistle-stop tour for HMS Campbeltown

HMS Campbeltown has seen the last of her home port for more than a year.

The frigate is not heading off on a marathon deployment, however. She's paying a poignant visit to France, heading to her namesake town, then steaming to Rosyth for a multi-million pound refit.

France first, and the port where the ship and her sailors were immortalised more than six decades ago.

In March 1942, the previous Campbeltown, a former US destroyer, rammed the dry dock at St Nazaire and was blown up by hidden charges.

The explosion rendered the dry dock useless for five years – and scuppered any hope that the Germans might use it for their surface fleet.

Campbeltown's captain that fateful day Lt Cdr Stephen Halden Beattie earned the VC for his bravery.

Sixty-six years later his son Nick sailed with the modernday frigate and members of the St Nazaire Association to take part in a memorial service with the ship's company in the French port, followed by a civic reception.

There are more receptions in store for Campbeltown's sailors when she heads to the Scottish town for which she is named to catch up with locals and affiliates, taking some to sea for a day.

After that there's a spell of exercises in Scottish waters before heading for Rosyth and refit

The ship's company will be reduced from around 250 to just 35 as the Type 22 undergoes a major overhaul to her machinery and weapons systems.

"After what's been a very busy period for the ship with a lot of time away on operations, we have two very important visits before going into refit," said Lt Cdr Colin Williams, Campbeltown's CO.

"Most of the ship's company will be assigned to different vessels, so we'd like to express our thanks to all our friends in Devonport for the support we have received and say 'Au revoir – see you in 2009'."

O to be back at sea...

HELICOPTER carrier HMS Ocean has finally escaped the confines of the basin which has been her home for the past year.

Britain's largest warship is now on a tidal berth in her home port, one step closer to resuming her duties.

The assault ship – aka 'The Mighty O' as we've just learned – needed a thorough overhaul after her first decade of service which saw her involved in pretty much every major operation Britain's Forces have been committed to in the past ten years, notably Sierra Leone and Iraq.

All that left her pretty worn out, hence the lengthy spell with engineers from Babcock who gave her machinery a comprehensive makeover and improved the accommodation areas both for the ship's company and her embarked forces of aviators and Royal Marines.

The ship's company began trotting back on board in July, firing up generators and air conditioning plants (for the first time in 12 months).

Ocean has a hectic autumn ahead: sea trials followed by operational sea training.

She'll be at the hub of a major amphibious deployment heading east of Suez in the new year.

■ More observant readers of last month's Ship of the Month quite rightly pointed out that the previous Ocean, the aircraft carrier, was broken up in 1962, not 1952. Apologies, we hit the wrong key...







Going for (Pem)broke

SIX months in Rosyth are up for the ship's company of HMS Pembroke as they begin the long road to the Gulf.

The Sandown-class mine countermeasures vessel will be heading to Bahrain with HMS Grimsby to replace sisters Blyth and Ramsey as their lengthy spell in the Middle East draws to an end.

Both replacements have received overhauls ahead of their impending deployments.

Machinery was revamped, a new sonar was installed and new weapons mounts were fitted in keeping with her impending mission.

Pembroke emerged from Rosyth's ship shed in July after five months' work and finally returned to Faslane to begin work-up.

And although it was a rotten summer, the gods were smiling upon Pembroke; the 600-mile passage from the Forth to the Clyde was blessed by stunning weather, spectacular scenery and a smattering of wildlife.

It took a little over two days to cover the passage, helped along by new "super-slippery paint".

This, of course, was not a time for sightseeing; it was a time to practise navigation, run in the machinery and train new hands (several of whom had never been to sea before).

That training was just a gentle taster of what was to come: five weeks of intense workout with the Flag Officer Sea Training team (currently ongoing).

Once she sails through that she'll head east in tandem with Grimsby.



Albion dominates the Mersey waterfront as she's berthed at Liverpool's cruise liner terminal
 Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Hooper, HMS Albion

Chester draws in Albion

ASSAULT ship HMS Albion will be out of action for the next six or so months as she undergoes a major overhaul in Devonport.

Before the engineers, shipwrights and technicians got to grips with her, the warship sailed with affiliates aboard to Liverpool – as close as the 18,000-tonne vessel can get to her adopted city of Chester.

Those guests included Chester's Lord Mayor, Cheshire police officers, Sea Cadets and Royal Naval Association veterans.

They were joined by around 200 dignitaries for an official reception once Albion arrived

on the Mersey.
The visit wasn't all about Very

Important Personages.

The gangway was opened to the public, 1,500 of whom came aboard to see Albion's cavernous loading dock and other impressive facilities.

And then it was on the bus (quite a few buses actually) for the relatively short trip to Chester, where Albion's sailors and marines celebrated the Freedom of the City by marching through its historic streets in traditional fashion, cheered on by its residents.

Even more popular, perhaps, was the ensuing rig run during which the sailors and green berets, we're told, "made the most of Chester's hospitality"

most of Chester's hospitality".
All good things come to an

end, and now Albion's as much building site as she is warship, undergoing a £27m upgrade.

On top of the usual maintenance, over the winter the experts at Babcock in Devonport will be improving the ship's living quarters and weapons and combat systems.

Albion returns to the Fleet next May and will spend the remainder of 2009 working up, taking over from her sister Bulwark as the on-call assault ship at the end of the year.



Canine nine nine

FOR all their rufty-tuftyness, deep down you know our fliers are just big softies.

So when Lt Pete McCormick spotted two doleful eyes looking longingly at him, he had to help.

Except he was several score feet in the air at the controls of a Sea King... and the doleful eyes belonged to a collie stuck half-way up a Cornish cliff.

The 771 NAS Sea King from Culdrose had been scrambled to rescue two walkers cut off by the Bristol Channel near Watergate Bay, Newquay.

And that's something the helicopter crew did safely, but in the middle of the rescue pilot Pete saw two eyes peering back at him.

"We managed to lower our aircrewman, PO Jason Bibby, on to the cliff and saw that the eyes belonged to a collie that looked a bit like Shep [Ask your parents – Ed]," said Pete.

Aircraft commander Lt Cdr Mike Luscombe takes up the tale: "Despite the noise from the helicopter, the dog was very pleased to see Jason – but he was obviously in pain because he growled.

"Jason managed to calm him down and noticed that he had a broken paw."

The injured creature was scooped up in a harness and landed inside the helicopter before being handed over first to the Coastguard, then to a local vets.

As it turned out, the dog - Yossy - had been missing for a week; now patched up, he's been reunited with his owner.

"Yossy was a lovely dog - he was as good as gold while he sat in the back of the aircraft, obviously pleased to be taken to safety," said Mike.

The ordeal did cost Yossy his leg – the vets were unable to save it – but he did gain some new friends, who came to see him after he recovered from his operation (pictured above).

Oceans three



HOW do you sail through the three principal oceans but not do a global deployment?

The men and women of HMS Northumberland have the answer, having set off on one of the most varied deployments in recent years.

On a wonderful summer's day in Plymouth (ie overcast skies and coat/jumper weather), families gathered on The Hoe and at Devil's Point (pcitured above) to wish loved ones God Speed.

The deployment begins in earnest east of Suez in support of Operation Calash, one of the security operations enforced by Allied maritime powers.

But why stop in the Indian Ocean?

The core of the frigate's tour of duty comes around the Falklands, providing reassurance to British citizens and UK interests in the South Atlantic.

And that means a trip around the Cape of Good Hope to move between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

And if you've passed one of the great capes in the

Yes, after her spell around the Falklands, Northumberland will navigate the more treacherous waters of Cape Horn before hugging the western coast of South America, nipping through the Panama Canal, calling in on the Caribbean, and

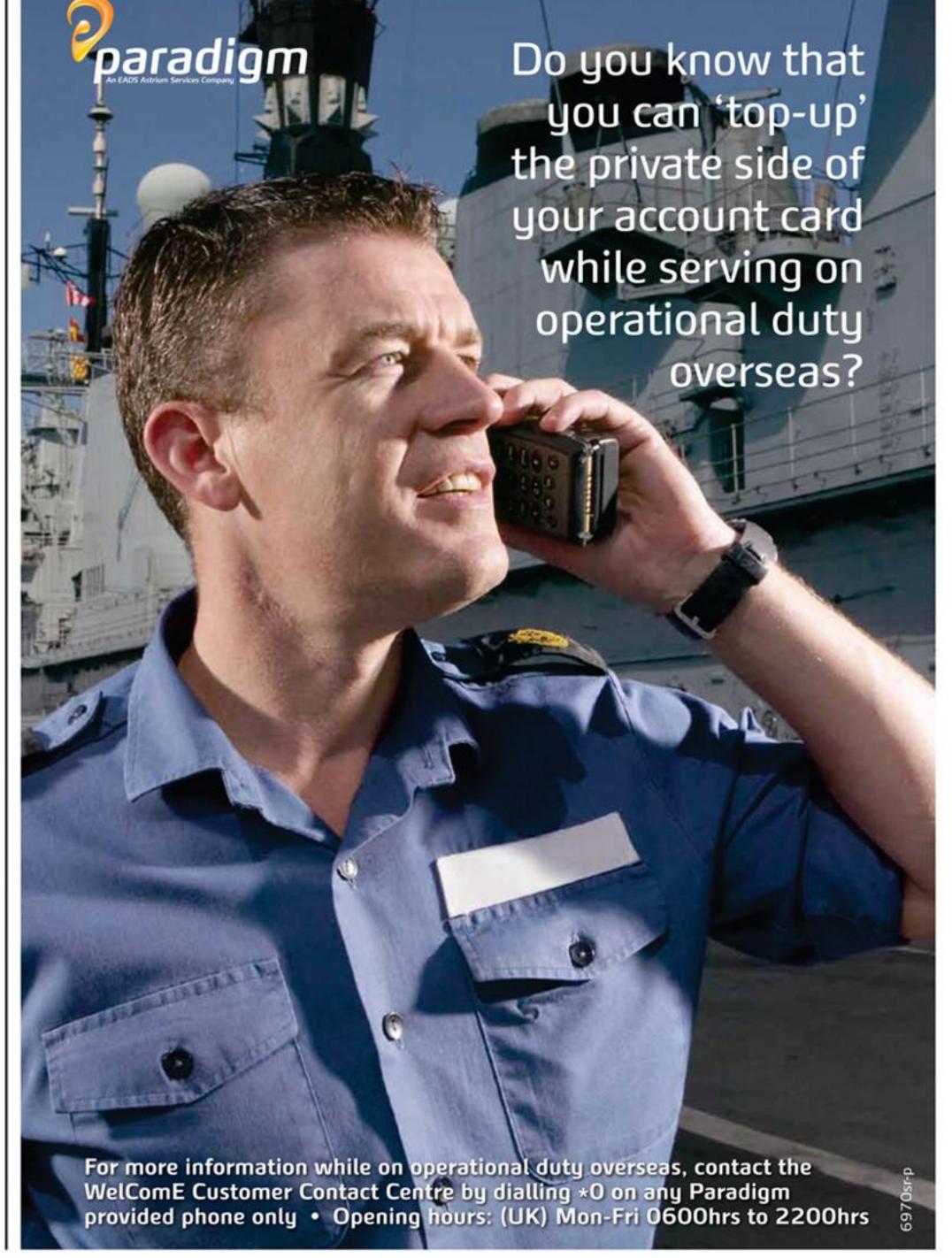
finally crossing the North Atlantic for home... ...Which is why some of the ship's company are calling their deployment a

"With over six months away from home,
I and my crew will of course miss the loved
ones that we leave behind," said Commanding
Officer Cdr Martin Simpson.

"We also know that we are fulfilling duties that are important to the UK and all countries which use the seas.

"Our role in providing safe passage to all legal vessels – and deterring those that aren't – remains as important and as relevant today as it was 100 years ago."

Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU Drake



GLOBAL REACH

Brocklesby Channels her energies

LAST month it was Sark, this month her neighbour Alderney received a visit from a British warship.

Sark hadn't seen a vessel flying the White Ensign in a quarter of a century (HMS Cattistock put that right).

The people of Alderney hadn't been starved of an RN visitor for quite so long.

But it was still six years since fishery protection ship HMS Alderney paid her farewell visit to the isle.

Minehunter HMS Brocklesby plugged that gap, anchoring in Alderney Harbour off the village of Bray, whose inhabitants were rather chuffed to see the sailors.

Despite being a boat ride away, many islanders took the opportunity to tour this rare visitor – especially Alderney's youth groups (the Cubs were rather awestruck by the warship's 30mm main gun).

And one in every 24 Alderney residents – or 100 spectators if you prefer – turned up to watch the ship's football team take on the island's finest.

The locals proved too good for the sailors – five of whom had never played with the Brocklesby side before – dispatching the visitors 4-0 on a glorious summer's day.

The minehunter men weren't worn out by their sporting exertions and went on a tour of the island – the third largest in the Channel Island chain – to see the capital St Anne and some of the historic fortifications safeguarding Alderney from invasion.

Before departing, Brocklesby's CO Lt Cdr Tom Tredray presented items from the RN Trophy Store to the island's president, Sir Norman Browse, as well as a ship's plaque.

"My ship's company worked fantastically hard to bring Brocklesby to Alderney – and we had a great time there," said Lt Cdr Tredray.

Brocklesby's ship's company had only recently taken charge of their vessel when they headed across the Channel.

They had previously been in charge of her sister Chiddingfold in the Gulf as part of the rotation of the entire Hunt-class squadron through the Middle East (see page 2).

The angels of Mersey

ENGINEERS from fishery protection ship HMS Mersey saved the lives – and boat – of Danish trawlermen when the North Sea threatened to overwhelm it.

The Portsmouth-based patrol vessel was working with the Dutch around 40 miles off the Netherlands coast when she picked up a mayday from the Danish fishing boat Inger Lis a dozen miles away.

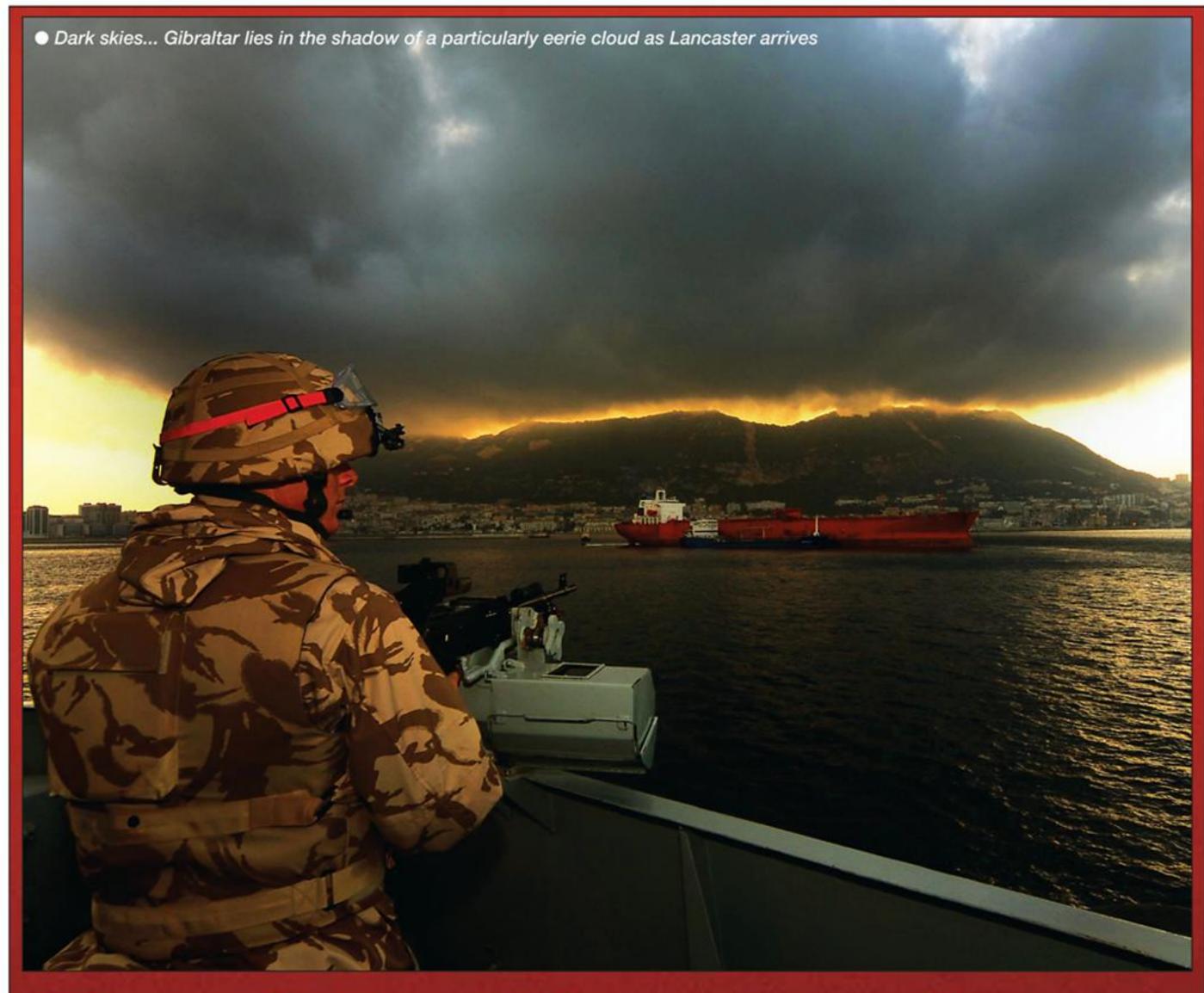
Mersey's seaboat was dispatched with LET(ME) Gerard Crummey and ET(ME) Tom Randall aboard to help the Danes.

The duo found water five feet deep in the engine room – and the Inger Lis' engine itself almost submerged.

A heavy duty pump was sent across from Mersey and within 15 minutes the two sailors had the engine room free of water once more.

They found the source of the leak – near the trawler's rudder – but they were unable to fix it and stop several gallons of the North Sea pouring in every minute. Thankfully, the pumps kept the sea at bay.

The stricken vessel was eventually towed into port by a Dutch lifeboat, while the Mersey men returned to their ship to resume fishery protection patrols.



Red is the colour

BARELY had the distinctive droning of Merlin engines faded over the Solent than HMS Lancaster was half a world away beginning her six-month tour of duty.

The frigate received a traditional send-off from families and a vintage Lancaster bomber, kindly provided by the RAF whenever the warship heads off on or back from deployment.

The characteristic sound of the fabled bomber may (or may not) have drowned out an equally distinctive noise – ET William 'Kiddie' Child dressed in traditional Scottish garb, playing the bagpipes as the frigate passed Round Tower.

Lancaster's latest deployment takes her east of Suez – increasingly the home of the Type 23 fleet – in support of Allied operations to deny criminals and terrorists use of the high seas.

The Red Rose frigate paid a lightning visit to Gib – but not too lightning that her sailors couldn't attempt the Rock Race under particularly ominous skies; Nelson was the first man to the top, AB Nelson Smith that is.

Then it was a pretty swift crossing of the Med too. The passage from the Rock to Soudha Bay in Crete, Lancaster's next port of call, was crammed with fire drills, live firing tests, machinery breakdown exercises, men overboard (not real ones), and finally a Merlin crash on the flight deck (again, not a real one).

There was a little time for relaxation, however – an Olympic-themed 'hands to bathe' courtesy of a hurriedly-installed 'diving board'.

The stop in Soudha (for fuel) proved barely any longer than the stop in Gib (some sailors did manage to get ashore in the port/resort of Chania).

Next stop, Suez. The warship passed through the famous canal in the middle of a convoy of merchant ships – container vessels and tankers.

It was, said Surg Lt Nic 'The Doc' Dodds, "one of the oddest cavalcades I have ever seen". It was also not a lot of fun.

"Our boys – upper-deck weapons crew – were standing behind the Miniguns and GPMGs in the sweltering heat, ever vigilant for attack, sweat in eyes, Kevlar body armour and combats on, as time dribbled endlessly

by," the surgeon added.

Thankfully, nothing lasts for ever, and the drab backdrop of Suez soon gave way first to the Red Sea, then to the Gulf of Aden.

Lancaster is now attached to Operation Calash, the security sweep of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean which attempts to strangle piracy, drug smuggling, people trafficking and other illegal activities on these busy

"The mood onboard has definitely changed now - calmer, more methodical, more tense. It's here and now that the deployment proper begins."

You can follow Lancaster's deployment courtesy of Nic The Doc's internet diary (blog) at www.royal-navy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.7076



Argyll deals crimelords a major blow

COCAINE worth more than £5m was seized in a joint operation involving the RN and Customs officials.

HMS Argyll and two Customs cutters bore down on a yacht 15 miles off the Cornish coast, the last act in a major criminal investigation overseen by the UK's Serious Organised Crime Agency – 'Britain's FBI'.

The trio struck at dawn, searching the 35ft Ronin and finding three large sacks hidden containing around 100 1kg bags of cocaine.

Officials say an important blow has been delivered to an organised criminal network in the capital.

"All of us were delighted to be able to contribute. We routinely train with personnel from other agencies and it is gratifying to be reminded that the training works and to know we have made a difference," said Cdr Peter Olive, Argyll's Commanding Officer.

Two men were arrested aboard the Ronin, which had come from the Caribbean; a third man was later arrested in London.

The yacht was taken to Plymouth for forensic examination.

A Daring rescue

ALTHOUGH she's not even officially entered Naval service yet, Type 45 HMS Daring is already making her mark around the nation's coast, rushing to the rescue of a fishing vessel off Arran.

The destroyer, crewed by both Royal Navy and BVT Surface Fleet staff, put her sea trials in the Firth of Clyde on hold when she picked up a distress call from the Irish trawler Paloma.

Sixteen minutes later Daring arrived at the scene to find the 33ft fishing boat taking on water at an alarming rate.

Daring launched her own fast inflatable boat and BVT's Weapons and Outfit Engineer Willie Brownless boarded Paloma to help the two crewmen. Although the water was already up to the level of the engine room plates, he judged the boat would be able to regain her stability by pumping out the water.

Shortly afterwards lifeboats from Arran and Troon arrived to escort Paloma safely back to the Ayrshire coast.

Farewell Intrepid

THE number of surviving ships from the Falklands campaign is one fewer, sadly, as work begins dismantling HMS Intrepid.

The assault ship, which was key to re-taking the South Atlantic islands in 1982, was towed out of Portsmouth last month, bound for the breaker's yard.

Intrepid and her sister
Fearless were spared a similar
fate a generation ago – a
decision which was vindicated
within months when Argentina
invaded the Falklands.

to be the landing ships' finest

Intrepid spent the last dozen years of her life laid up in Portsmouth waiting for a call for action which never came. Her sister is already being

broken up (or 'recycled' in modern parlance) in Ghent.
British firm Leavesley
International won the

International won the contract to dismantle her sister on Merseyside in an 'environmentally-friendly' manner.

GLOBAL REACH



The noble Sausage

IT'S been two years since HMS Cumberland was last on the front line - but wait no longer, for she's Gulf-bound.

The Devonport-based frigate has undergone a major overhaul in her home port and, after successfully completing Operational Sea Training, has finally deployed once more.

The Mighty Sausage - she flies a large banger when she's refuelling - is joining a NATO task force, Standing Maritime Group 2, for the autumn.

The cosmopolitan task group - it currently comprises warships from Germany, Greece, Turkey and the US, with an Italian vessel as command ship under Rear Admiral Giovanni Gumiero gathered in the Spanish port of Rota before patrolling the Med.

Aside from the usual briefings and presentations, there were some more personal 'getting to know yous'.

Various sporting activities were organised between the international sailors, including football and volleyball.

Once at sea, the bonding continued as the force conducted a series of anti-aircraft and antismuggling exercises to welcome Cumberland to the fold and help the frigate and her ship's company get used to the NATO way of working.

A Navy News went to press, the task group could be found in the Adriatic and eastern Med for NATO war games, Noble Midas, which will cement the ships' position as NATO Reaction Force.

From there the force slips through the Suez Canal, into the Red Sea and on ultimately into the Gulf to exercise with the navies of Qatar and Kuwait.

The force has a twofold mission: to safeguard the seas by keeping tabs on all shipping movements and to spread the NATO and maritime security word among friendly nations.



North West passage for **Busy Bee**

LIVERPOOL'S new cruise liner hosted yet another warship, this time HMS Manchester.

Ark Royal, Portland and Mersey among others have already berthed at the impressive facility... and HMS Albion (see page 5) had barely left when the Type 42 destroyer arrived.

Liverpool is as close as the destroyer can get to Manchester; she can fit down the ship canal to the Lancastrian metropolis... but the bridges spanning it wouldn't do her masts a lot of good.

Once in Liverpool, the Busy Bee invited cadets and reserve forces aboard for a reception, plus members of the public for the obligatory 'ship open to visitors' afternoon.

Then it was a short trip along the M62 to Manchester for a service of thanksgiving in the city's cathedral, followed by a civic reception hosted by the city council.

This was the first visit to the North West by the destroyer in 18 months; a large chunk of 2007 and 2008 was devoted to escorting the US carrier Harry S

Truman in the Gulf. The ship spends the rest of the year on work-up and exercises before deploying to the South Atlantic in 2009.



AFTER five-year hiatus, British warships returned to the Iraqi port they helped re-open as co-operation between the two navies is stepped up.

In the spring of 2003, an RNled minehunting force cleared the way into Umm Qasr, allowing the first shipment of humanitarian aid to sail up the Khawr Abd Allah in RFA Sir Galahad.

Five years down the line, the port – a stone's throw from the Kuwaiti border - is the gateway for 80 per cent of Iraq's imports and home to the re-born Iraqi Navy.

The latter are being taught and trained by Allied sailors and marines of the Naval Transition

Team, headed by the Royal Navy. The Iraqi Navy will double in terms of personnel and quadruple in terms of number of ships in the coming months - the first of a new batch of patrol boats will be delivered next year.

With that in mind, working hand-in-hand with Allied warships is key to nurturing the Iraqi sailors

and marines so they can one day take charge of all security patrols in their own waters - hence the return of RN vessels to Umm Qasr.

Fittingly, it was two mine countermeasure vessels which made that return journey - HM Ships Blyth and Atherstone - just as minehunters had cleared the way in March 2003.

"Britain's commitment to the development of Iraq is progressing well and was evident during our stay," enthused Lt Cdr Steve Holloway, Atherstone's CO.

"The visit has shown there's increased stability in the region and bodes well for the future of Iraq and its armed forces."

And after a five-year absence from the port, the RN's outgoing commander in the Gulf theatre, Cdre Keith Winstanley, said more British vessels would be calling in.

"The Iraqi Navy continues to make steady progress towards the time when we will see them in command of operations in the northern Gulf. The visit of Blyth and Atherstone to Umm Qasr is an important step along that path," he added.

Blyth has new masters in the latest roulement of minehunting crews in the Gulf as part of the Aintree deployment (HMS Ramsey is the other half of the duo) to keep the ships east of Suez for a sustained period.

The current custodians of Blyth are - or rather were - the ship's company of sister ship HMS Walney, although for some there's a distinct feeling of déjà vu.

CO Lt Cdr John Craig is on his third spell in charge of the Sandown-class ship. His XO Lt Adrian Rowberry was ops officer of HMS Ramsey whose coxswain was PO(D) Dickson... who's come across to Blyth, as have fellow 'Ramseyers' LS 'Cooky' Cooke and AB(MW) 'Flash' Gordon.

Other things stay the same in the Gulf, too. It's still 'redders' -45°C - for example.

"It's hard to believe that we would ever look back on Faslane weather fondly, but we do," said Lt Cdr Craig.

The Aintree force is based in Bahrain, which offers plenty for the sailors to do - except last

month. Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, ran throughout September, shutting Bahrain's bars and restaurants.

Also closed, though for refurbishment rather than for religious reasons, was the state's only golf course... which was particularly galling for one Blyth sailor, especially after he'd convinced airline staff at Heathrow to allow his set of clubs on the flight out to the Middle East.

This is the last changeover of Sandown crews for this deployment; the current ships' companies will bring the vessels home - but two more mine countermeasures vessels will be heading in the opposite direction from Faslane to keep the British end up in Bahrain.

18 sailors sacked after drugs shame

EIGHTEEN sailors were dismissed from their ship – and from the Service - after testing positive for cocaine use on deployment.

The Compulsory Drugs Test team arrived unannounced on HMS Liverpool after the destroyer had visited Santos in Brazil.

Their tests revealed that 18 of the ship's company - from different messes and of different ranks - had taken cocaine.

The sailors were immediately removed from the ship and flown home. They have now been discharged from the Senior Service in line with the RN's 'zero tolerance' policy on the use of illegal substances.

Official figures show that fewer than one in every 250 sailors and Royal Marines tested for drug use give a positive result. The figure for comparative tests in civvy street is seven in every 100.

We've seen you before...

OH HOW the good folk of HMS Illustrious must love Plymouth.

For the second time this year, the Harrier carrier is back in the bosom of Flag Officer Sea Training.

Lusty didn't especially enjoy her first trip at the beginning of the year when all her trials and tribulations were captured on camera by the Channel 5 documentary Warship.

That training was meant to (and did) whip her into shape for her deployment east of Suez.

Since returning from the Indian Ocean, the ship's undergone some muchneeded TLC in Portsmouth (interspersed with Meet your Navy).

A new 'term' has brought new sailors aboard and new challenges, hence the need for the full FOST package - ahead of exercises around the UK for the remainder of 2008.

A warm welcome for Exeter

THERE was a hearty welcome home for veteran destroyer HMS Exeter at the end of her whistle-stop summer tour of the North Atlantic.

Tugs fired up their water cannon and two Hawk jets raced overhead, a bugler, er, bugled on Round Tower, surrounded by friends and family of the ship's company and Exeter 82 Association veterans who took the ship through the Falklands conflict (pictured below).

Deployments to Iceland, Norway and Russia lasting a few weeks do not ordinarily receive

such a greeting.

But this was, perhaps, the destroyer's final homecoming. She's going into extended readiness ahead of paying off next year.

So if this was to be the final welcome for a loyal servant, best make it a memorable one.

Joining Exeter for the

occasion was Deputy Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Vice Admiral Paul Boissier, who thanked the ship's company for their efforts and rewarded Lt 'Shakey' Stevens for his long service and good conduct with the appropriate medal (leaving 'Shakey'

"for once lost for words"). LET(WE) Shaun Graham was equally dumbfounded when he received the same recognition from the admiral.

The VIP departed before Exeter's historic entry into Portsmouth - but not before CO Cdr Paul Brown had presented a cheque for Help for Heroes on behalf of the ship's company.

"Regardless of the length of time away, it's always an emotional time returning to our home port - and the prospect of being reunited with families and friends," Cdr Brown





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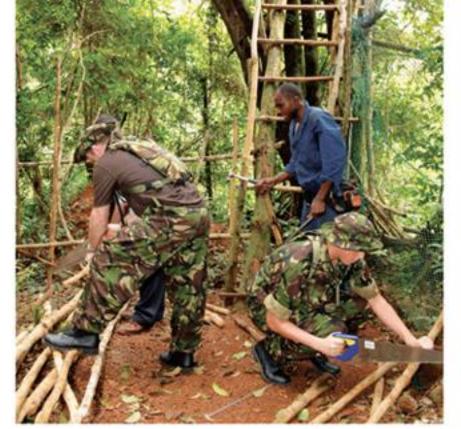
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No ice in paradise



The frozen expanses of Antarctica have been replaced by the lushness of West Africa as ice ship HMS Endurance sailed into uncharted waters – uncharted for her.

Yet the message banged by the Red Plum drum – the effects of climate change and importance of environmental responsibility – remain the same whether the backdrop is bergs and ice shelves or rich African vegetation.

The icebreaker/survey ship is on an 18-month deployment away from her home base of Portsmouth.

Instead of heading for the Solent after her spell of surveying around Antarctica, she headed for Simon's Town in South Africa for some much needed TLC after being exposed to the harsh conditions associated with the icy continent.

But what happens in Antarctica

– and its Northern Hemisphere
counterpart – directly, and
indirectly, impacts upon the lives
and livelihoods of people in West
Africa, and much further afield.

And so it was that Endurance edged up the African coast, first to Ghana, then to Sierra Leone, hosting government leaders, meteorologists, scientists and British officials for brainstorming sessions to discuss the way ahead.

Ghana's coastal strip might appear lush, but in the north of the land climatic changes and shifts are making their presence felt.

Clearing forests and a dramatic drop in rainfall – 20 per cent less now falls than in the 1980s

– has led to the desert creeping
ever southwards and invading
farmland.

As in the West, so in West Africa: the only real change environmentally is effected when environmental issues become political issues.

"African leaders are yet to fully grasp the implications on the continent of the phenomenon of climate change, yet the evidence is all around us," said Sean Doolan, regional advisor

for the UK's Department for International Development.

And although local conditions and issues, such as deforestation, are playing their part, Endurance's CO Capt Bob Tarrant and his team are in no doubt that what happens in his ship's normal domain and what happens in West Africa are connected.

"We and the scientists from the British Antarctic Survey witness first hand the acute effects of the changes to the world's climate in our everyday working environment," Capt Tarrant added.

Climate change is just one challenge facing Ghana's leaders. Perhaps more pressing on a day-to-day basis is piracy and smuggling.

Fish thieves poach an estimated £40m of, er, fish every year from Ghanaian waters, there's growing evidence of drug smuggling via the beaches and the country's

oil fields are potential targets for pirates and terrorists.

So Endurance showed Ghanaian authorities how the RN gathers intelligence and deals with such thorny issues.

Around 100 Ghanaian military and civilian personnel spent four days with the British sailors and marines, who imparted practical and theoretical skills including maritime security, fishery protection, boarding, search and rescue and customs procedures.

"The professional skills and energy with which the Royal Navy has provided such high-quality training will be reflected by the increased effectiveness of our navy," said Lt Kenneth Sarbah, the Ghanaian liaison officer for the spell of training.

"It's been a very rewarding few days,"
Capt Tarrant said of Endurance's week in

Ghana.

"I've been thrilled with the vigour with which my ship's company have used their unique mix of skills and expertise to support their colleagues in the Ghanaian Navy."

Mercifully, it wasn't all piracy, terrorism and 'the end of the world is nigh' in Ghana. There was plenty of hope too.

A sizeable number of Endurance's sailors and Royal Marines headed to an orphanage whose 60 or so youngsters needed a bit of help sprucing up their facilities, but above all they needed to see a few friendly faces.

And so aside from smartening the grounds and building a new kitchen (or is it a galley now?) the Endurance team sang, played football and cricket and handed out Pompey kits to the youngsters.

"The best part was just being with the children," said 'Bish' Rev Ralph Barber, Endurance's chaplain.

"They had nothing, but were so friendly, so happy. At times we all felt emotional."

And there was one more treat for the children, when the older ones were invited on board the icebreaker.

"The whole entourage came to a grinding halt at a set of stairs," said Capt Tarrant. "They'd never seen stairs before

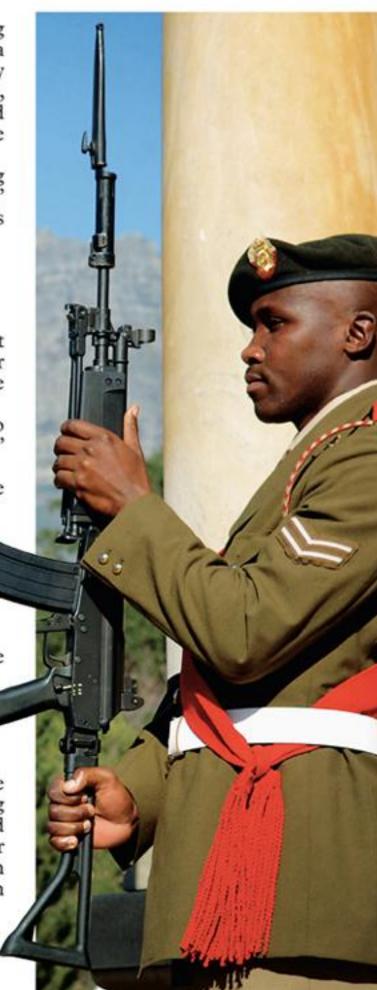
and didn't know how to use them.

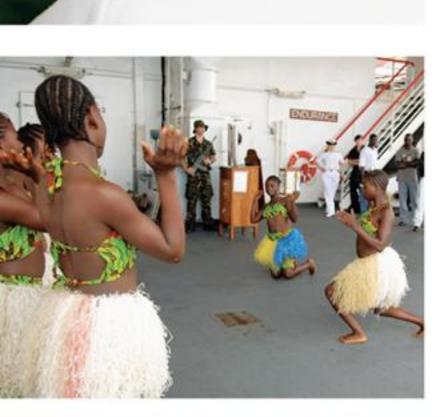
"They had never had ice creams either and wanted to keep the wooden lollipop sticks."

Much of Endurance's work in Ghana was repeated along the coast in Sierra Leone, with the ship also carrying out surveys on the approaches to Freetown, the country's capital and principal port.

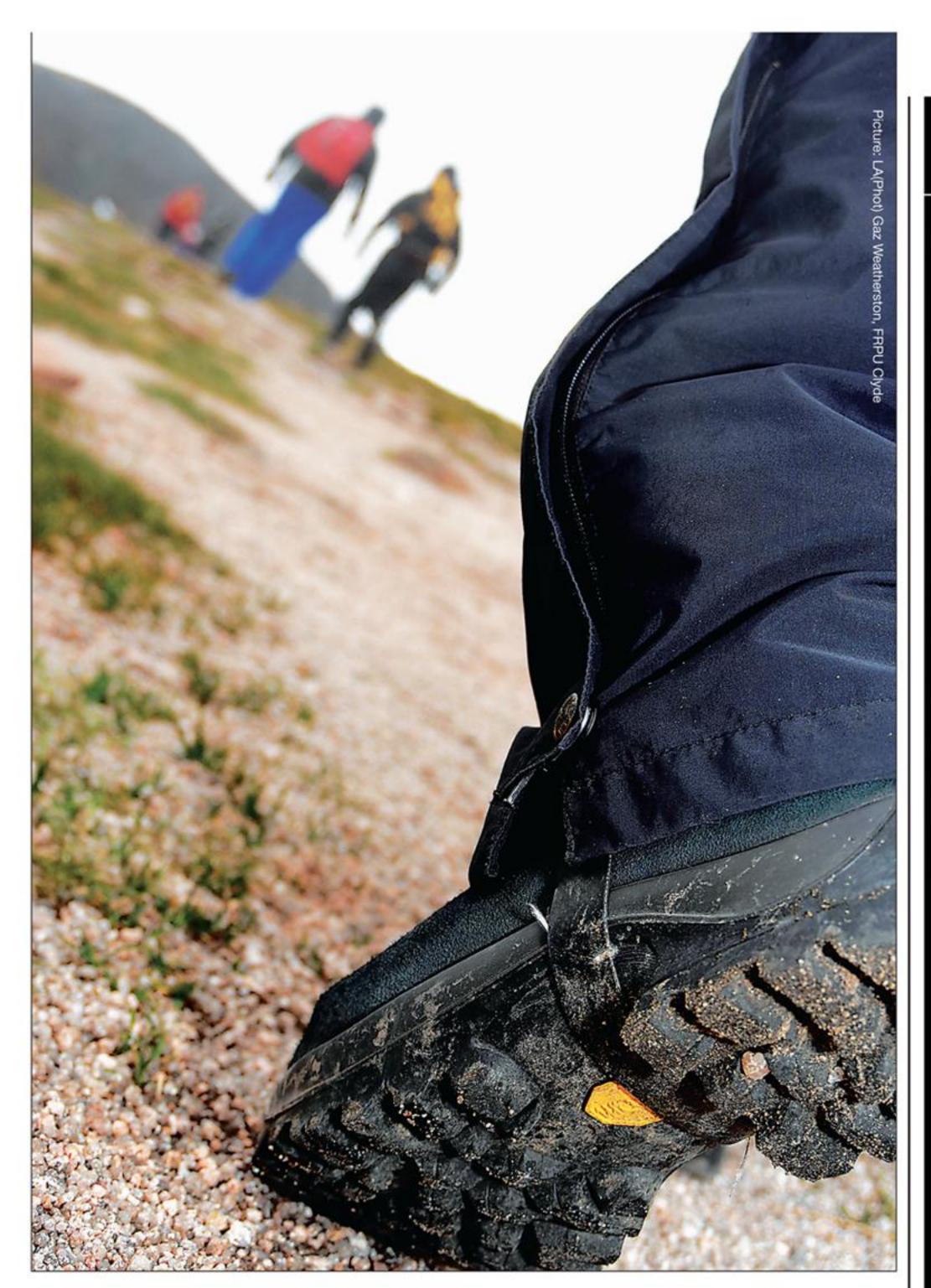
Once safely alongside, the Red Plum hosted a day-long seminar on climate change and the importance of looking after Sierra Leone's environment which is, in parts, under threat from deforestation and illegal mining.

Among the figures aboard the ice ship for the discussion were Sierra Leone's vice president, Samuel Samsumana.









Take a hike

PICTURE the Crusades and you conjure up images of knights and Saracens, sandy fortresses and mediaeval cities.

Scotland probably doesn't figure.

Cairngorm Crusade 08 was intended to give RN personnel north of the border a taste of the outdoors - in line with Fleet HQ's growing emphasis on adventurous training (AT) and imbuing sailors and marines with added moral toughness.

Three five-day packages of activities - chiefly biking, walking and climbing - were organised by the team at the AT Store in Clyde Naval Base, who then decamped to the other side of Scotland and the Cairngorm National Park.

Participants - all volunteers - arrived at Rothiemurchus Lodge, near Aviemore, and were soon involved in a nine-kilometre (five-mile) 'leg stretch' through the Chalamain Gap, a loop beginning and ending at the lodge.

They were then divided into groups for the following three days: rock climbing at Huntly's Cave and Cummingston, a 48-kilometre (30-mile) mountain biking day around Loch an Eilein and the Glenmore Forest, and also a 20-kilometre (12-mile)

hill walk, bagging two Munros, Ben Macdui and Cairngorm en route.

And when not yomping and climbing around the Highlands, there were plenty of things to keep the adventurous bunch busy (or help them relax): health spa, quiz night, barbecue, plus visits to some of the Cairngorms' culture.

"Feedback from this year's personnel confirmed that Cairngorm Crusade was a resounding success," enthused PO(PT) Rob Greetham.

"It was a physically and mentally-demanding week - but also a very enjoyable one, which ticked all the right boxes and definitely achieved its aim of taking people out of their comfort zone in a challenging but enjoyable environment."

Indeed, on the back of feedback from this year's trip, it will return next year (cunningly titled Cairngorm Crusade 09), likely to be run as two fortnightly packages.

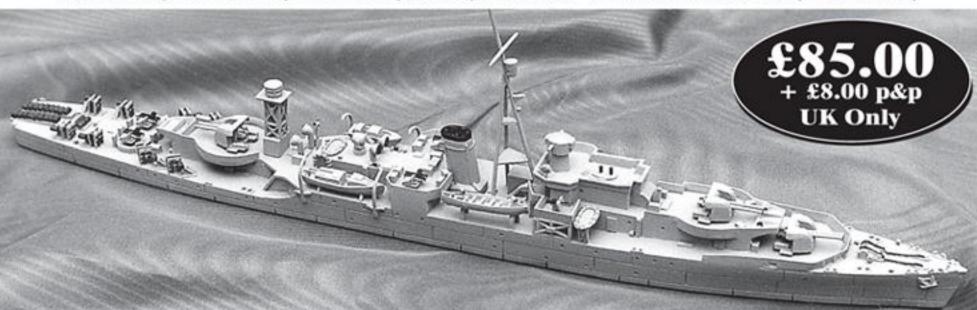
That will allow operational units to choose suitable dates outside deployment periods: June 15-19 and 22-26 or October 5-9 and 12-16.

Details from POPT Greetham or Sgt Burgoyne on 93255 3300/3137.

Bavaria Surprise, page 35

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A testing time with NATO

BRITISH ship HMS Ledbury has been busy putting her mine-hunting skills to the test in the Mediterranean, as part of an eight-strong NATO MCM group led by HMS Roebuck.

The minehunter, operating as part of SNMCMG1 (or in long-speak Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Group 1), has been putting her mine-hunting systems through their paces at the NATO Underwater Research Centre (NURC) off the coast of La Spezia, Italy.

The tests involve Ledbury, plus the other MCMVs of the group, seeking out ordnance over sections of the seabed, where exercise mines have been laid in locations known only to the NURC staff.

The ships then compare their results with the recorded locations of the mines, allowing accurate assessment of their detection abilities – in Ledbury's case with a particular eye to her 2193 Sonar in the warm and complex waters of the western Mediterranean.

The Hunt's commanding officer Lt Cdr Chris
Nelson admitted: "It's a great
privilege to be able to use these
facilities to test our mine detection
capability and also the abilities of
the ship's crew.

"It has been a testing time and we have been able to learn a lot which should serve us well in future work with the task group and beyond."

Survey ship HMS
Roebuck is now the longest serving member of
the Group, having been
flagship since January
2008.

During this tasking

she is the Command

and Control ship for the
NATO staff who watch
over the actions of their
'family' during operations.

HMS Roebuck is expected to
return to her role as a coastal

return to her role as a coastal survey vessel when she is released from MCM support duties in early 2009.

The NATO minehunting group

was joined by some new members over the summer including the Estonian ship ENS Admiral Cowan.

For Royal Naval eyes this

was a familiar face as the minehunter had previously been HMS Sandown, the first of class for the British MCMVs which are now based in Scotland.

After a multi-million pound refit the Estonians took receipt of three Sandowns in 2007 – the biggest purchase of the Estonian Navy since joining NATO.

The ship's new name

she is named after Admiral Walter 'Tich' Cowan who, as a commodore, commanded the British 1st Light Cruiser Squadron that fought alongside the Estonians in their battle for independence in 1919.

ENS Admiral Cowan was the first Estonian vessel to enter the Mediterranean Sea as part of the country's commitment to NATO.

Her commanding officer Lt Cdr Johan-Elias Seljamaa said: "The ship and her crew have certainly welcomed the opportunity to work as part of SNMCMG1.

"The professionalism of my people and the capabilities of my ship are sure to be tested.

"The experience will stand us in good stead and benefit the Group during out time together in the Med."

after joining the Group,
Admiral Cowan and her
counterparts from the UK,
Germany, Belgium, the
Netherlands, France,
Italy and Norway
began a busy programme of exercises
which culminated in
Exercise Noble Midas,
which was due to take
place in the western and
central Mediterranean as

Just as well since shortly

Navy News went to press.

The group will also join up with its sister force, SNMCMG2, which operates in the Mediterranean throughout the year.

With thanks to Surg Lt Sudipta

• (top left) German MCM FGS Homburg, HMS Roebuck, Dutch HNLMS Urk and Estonian ENS Admiral Cowan in the Mediterranean

 (top) Ledbury leads the rest of the task group into Lisbon under the 25 of April Bridge

 (left) Diver1 Si Smyth on board Ledbury's dive boat after identifying a possible contact

 (below) Dutch ship HNLMS Urk, HMS Roebuck, Belgian BNS Lobelia and Italian ITS Numana



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The Electoral Commission

Reflecting on a first year

TEMPUS fugit, as the Romans said.

Yes, believe it or not it's 12 months since HMS Clyde arrived in the Falklands to take over guardianship of the islands' waters.

And it's amazing just how many miles you can clock up patrolling this southerly outpost of empire in a year - 27,000 nautical miles to be precise.

Much of that mileage has been accrued getting to know the 770plus islands in the Falklands archipelago.

Some of those she's come to know rather better than others; Mare Harbour is her home port, while Clyde has called in on Stanley, the islands' capital, on seven occasions - eight if you count her visit as Navy News went to press to celebrate her first birthday.

But not all Clyde's time is spent in the Falklands.

She's paid two visits to South Georgia (most recently in company with HMS Liverpool) and has made one foray into the Pacific to sail to Valparaiso in Chile via the Patagonian Canals.

That was the highlight of her first year - but none of the present ship's company remembers it as they've just changed over. Regular rotation of sailors keeps the ship's company fresh (82 sailors have so far been rotated through the ship since she arrived in the islands).

Day-to-day business revolves around defence of the Falklands, working hand-in-hand with RAF and Army units in the islands, conducting exercises, and getting to know the locals in this scattered islands community.

Clyde was the first complete warship built in Portsmouth in more than three decades in VT



Shipbuilding's new yard (the firm had built sections of Type 45 destroyers, but not a whole vessel).

She's similar, though not identical to her older sisters Tyne, Mersey and Severn - notably a beefed up main gun (30mm not

20mm) and an improved flight deck.

One thing she shares with her siblings is ownership: VT own Clyde and lease her to the RN, initially for five years.

The aim is to keep the patrol vessel in the South Atlantic for the

duration of her career, carrying out maintenance work and refits in the southern hemisphere rather than bringing Clyde all the way home.

That also means that unlike her predecessors Dumbarton and Leeds Castles, only one ship is required to patrol the Falklands.

As befitting the great river – and centre of shipbuilding - for which she is named, Clyde has had many predecessors, eight to be precise.

The Clyde lineage begins in 1796 with a 38-gun fifth-rate. From then until the 1930s, most Clydes enjoyed solid if unspectacular careers.

That changed with the seventh Clyde, a large River-class submarine which crippled the German battleship Gneisenau, mauled Italian shipping in the Mediterranean, and finally struck against Japanese shipping in the latter stages of World War 2. She earned all three of the ship's battle honours.

The boat was scrapped in 1946, but the name was resurrected



Norway.....1940 Mediterranean1941 Malta Convoys.....1942

Class: River-class Offshore Patrol Vessel (Helicopter) Pennant number: P257 Motto: Clwo (strength) Builder: VT Shipbuilding, Portsmouth Launched: June 14, 2006 Commissioned: January 30, 2007 Displacement: 1,962 tons Length: 81.5 metres Beam: 13.6 metres Draught: 3.8 metres Speed: 20+ knots Range: 7,800 nautical miles at 12kts Complement: 36 Propulsion: 2 x Ruston 12RK 270 engines, controllable pitch propellers, 280kW bow thruster, 3 x 250kW main generators, 1 x emergency generator, VTC control and monitoring system, Armament: 1 x 30mm BMARC gun, 5 x GPMG, 2 x Mk44 Minigun Sea boats: 1 x Pacific 22, 1 x Rigid Raider Mk III Helicopter: Flight deck can accommodate Lynx, Sea King or Merlin

within a decade as a Ton-class minesweeper. HMS Crichton, launched in 1953, was quickly retitled Clyde, a name she bore until the vessel was broken up more than 30 years later.

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HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.54

Lt William Nathan Hewett VC

AS IMPREGNABLE fortresses go, the Crimean bastion of Sevastopol has proven to be rather pregnable.

The Wehrmacht battered its way through the fortifications to raise the swastika in the summer of 1942. Within two years, the Red Army had booted it out again.

Pregnable it might be, but Sevastopol has always been a tough nut to crack, as the Allied armies learned in the autumn and winter of 1854-55 during the first modern siege of the fortress

The Tsar's armies were on a high. Just the day before they had beaten off an assault by British cavalry in a valley near Balaclava.

In due course, the Charge of the Light Brigade would enter military and literary mythology, but on October 26 1854 British forces were still reeling from the loss of two out of three of their finest cavalry.

In the wake of their victory, the Russian armies swept forward, determined to dislodge the invader and throw him into the Black Sea.

Four thousand Russians swarmed forward, intent upon smashing the British right flank at Sevastopol, including a battery manned by a naval brigade.

At the head of the battery stood a prickly junior naval officer, 20-year-old Lt William Nathan Wrighte Hewett - known, perhaps not affectionately, as 'Bully' - whose fiery temperament was matched by his doggedness.

In the heat of battle, commands and orders became muddled - a recurring theme in the Crimean War. With the Russians bearing down on his battery,

Hewett received orders to spike his gun and fall back with his men. "Retire?" he snarled. "Retire be damned!

Fire!" Under ferocious Russian rifle fire, he and his men slewed the gun around, blew the parapet away and then fired grapeshot into the advancing Russian ranks at point-blank range.

The enemy attack faltered. The Russians fell back, but Hewett showed them no mercy. He replaced grapeshot with solid 68lb rounds and continued to pour fire on his foe.

And so, the Russian steamroller was repulsed

and the slopes of Careenage Ravine were a charnel house of slaughtered infantry.

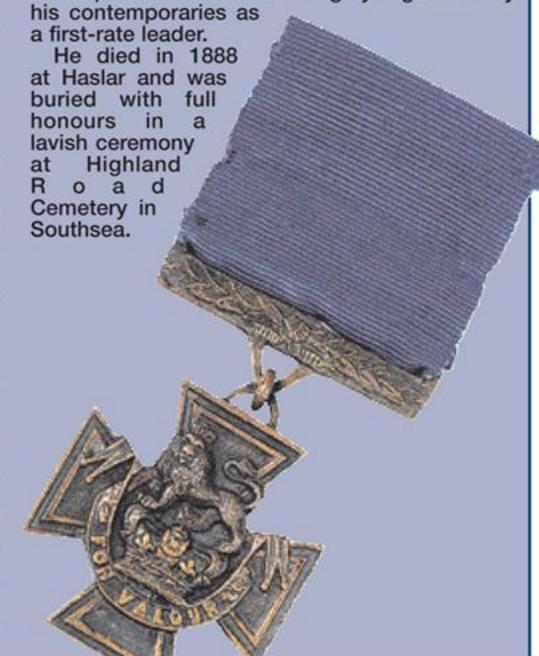
Sevastopol would eventually fall to the invader - but not until the following year.

And the cannons which once ringed the fortress and were now in British hands would eventually be carried back to the mother isle where their metal would forge a new award for gallantry.

'Bully' Hewett was only the fifth man to receive the Victoria Cross from the monarch for which it was named.

Such patronage did his naval career no harm; in the subsequent three decades he rose to the rank of vice admiral, eventually commanding the Channel Squadron.

With age and higher rank, he became no less prickly (he clashed regularly with a young 'Jackie' Fisher, an equally forthright figure, aboard HMS Ocean) but he remained highly-regarded by





BIRTHDAY girl RFA Argus has returned to her home port of Falmouth after a tenmonth deployment in the Middle East.

The ship has been serving as an aviation platform for 854 and 857 Naval Air Squadrons based at RNAS Culdrose.

While on deployment, RFA

Argus celebrated her 20th birthday, 3,000 miles from

She has been serving as a base for Sea King Mark 7 helicopters, which have been keeping an eye on life in the Arabian Gulf.

This surveillance allows the identification of abnormal activity, so that other surface

units can intercept, leading to major drugs busts such as the seizure made in June.

The aviation training ship demonstrated her full capabilities throughout the deployment, providing supplies for HMS Edinburgh and HMS Argyll.

On the anniversary of D-Day, she even conducted a Replenishment at Sea (RAS) to Germany's FGS Emden.

Not content with leaving it at that, the 'all-seeing' ship's Casualty Receiving Facility (CRF) remained ready for action during her time away.

International military figures who had an opportunity to witness the hospital's capability were surprised at the efficiency with which the unit runs on the multi-functional ship.

This year marks RFA Argus' 20th as a ship of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, after being acquired as a container ship in 1986.

The medical centre was added in readiness for her participation in the 1991 Gulf War.

RFA Argus is the tenth British naval ship to bear the name, and the most recent of the 20th

century was an aircraft carrier which acted as the eyes of the fleet.

Fitting, as the current RFA Argus seems to be living up to that tradition.

 Mk 7 Sea Kings (Airborne Surveillance and Control) on RFA Argus' flightdeck during her ten month Op Calash deployment to the Middle East



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* Based on DVLA 2007 figures





Officer, Lt Cdr Mark Anderson, said: "It went a long way to further strengthen already strong ties between the JMSDF and the RN - and was particularly poignant given that this week 150 years ago





A lengthy process

"EVERY Wings that comes in here and sees the two-island design throws their hands up in horror. But they all walk away happy."

So says Steve Dowdell, the mission system director for the future carrier under design by the Carrier Alliance.

There are a few conceptual issues for the navy's air carrier people to come to terms with.

Principal among them the realisation that there's a 20-minute walk between the bridge and Flyco, isolated within their own individual towers on the carrier's expansive flightdeck.

The putative members of the WE department might also blink in horror at the 1,740km of blown-fibre cabling that will support the mission system embedded within these new carriers.

However the engineers of BAE Systems Integrated Systems Technologies (Insyte) insist that their hard work in the planning will win anyone using the mission system around.

There'll also be a few raised eyebrows at the METOC's office: "No longer a window either, which I'm slightly nervous about. I do like the weathermen to know what's out there," remarked Cdr Simon Petitt, the Naval officer embedded in the team.

But he's reassured by the strength of the integrated METOC system which feeds in to the office.

All these elements are only part of the massive mission system which needs to be functioning smoothly for the carrier's arrival; main components include the combat system with radars, air traffic control, navigation and bridge, voice, data and video networks in an information system, and communication systems.

The mission system team are focused on identifying any problems early in the programme - where changes can be made before construction is under way.

To this end they have built scale mock-ups of several of the compartments, watching as real matelots run through their everyday jobs, and

tweaking the designs in response.

One example is within Flyco, where the team created a raised podium at the central position to ensure that eye-lines down to the deck were uninterrupted.

An additional bridge-wing was another addition that became clear after some time spent monitoring the use of that space.

The team have also spent time developing an Air Group Management Application (AGMA). Cdr Petitt said: "The aim of it is to help the operators move the aircraft around the deck. Aircraft carriers currently use sticky models of the aircraft on a metal ship.

"And it works with eight or nine aircraft, but when you're looking at 30 plus, it starts to become a much more complex jigsaw. We realised early on that in order to reach our sortie rate generation, it was important that they had some help to do that.

"AGMA has been tested on HMS Illustrious where they found it so useful they wanted to keep it."

He added: "We want to keep the sortie rate as lean as possible.

"One area that we've learnt a lot from the current carriers is layout. We've completely rearranged the current carriers so that the aircrew just walk through a series of briefings, rather than having to dot here, there and everywhere as they currently do.

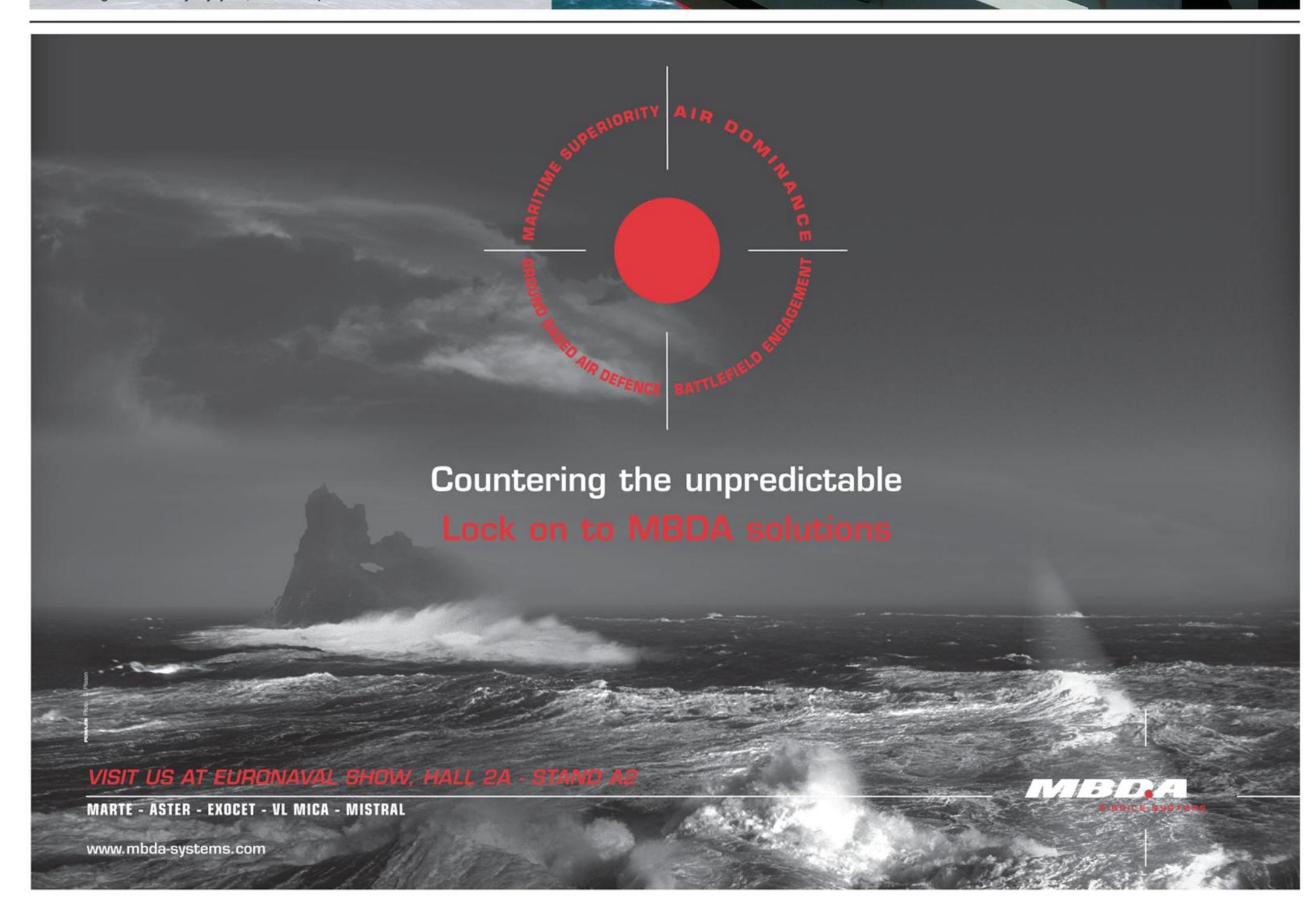
"It sounds like common sense, but common-sense isn't all that common."

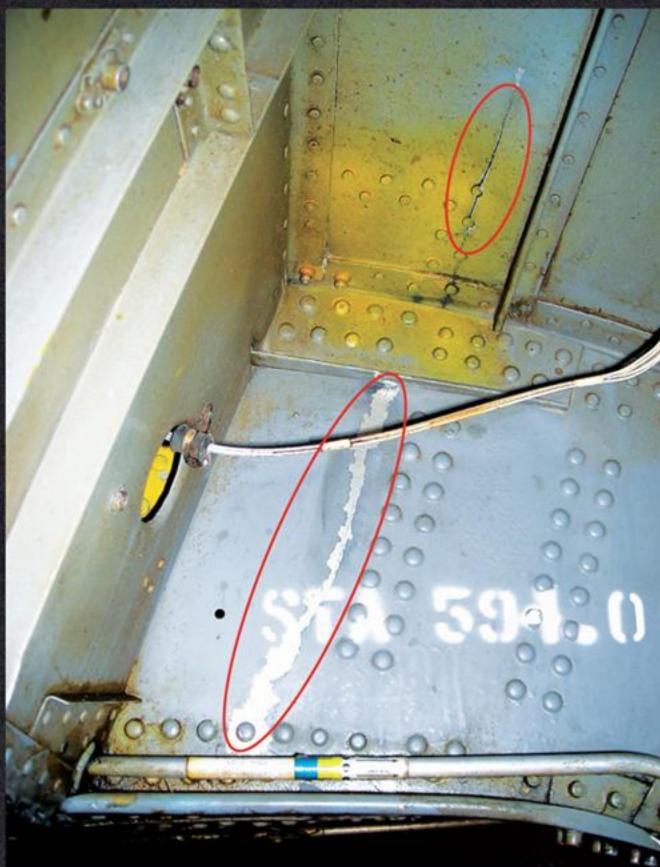
They make no secret that they're not looking to bring in ground-breaking new technology on the future carrier. Steve Dowdell admits plainly: "A no surprises culture is what we're aiming for."

They want to know that the technology on board is proven; that the different systems work with each other; that the people on board will know what they need to do.

They're keeping the innovation firmly in their approach, drawing together the disparate strands of technology, vision and people early in the process to smooth the arrival of these big, big







 Cracks in the outer skin (top) and inner fuselage of a Chinook – just one of the many engineering challenges the Fleet Forward Support (Air) team must contend with in Afghanistan and (below) a Minigun fitted to a Chinook - with a chute to get rid of spent cartridge cases, as designed by the naval air engineers



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Squadron engineers carry out regular servicing, but they also send regular samples containing small metal particles in the oil worn from the bearings and gears, back to Gosport.

Here, using processes the Mk1 from ranging sophisticated Eyeball, to analytical equipment such as spectrometers and electron microscopes, the samples are analysed for what should - and shouldn't - be there. Such is the nature of engines

and gearboxes that there will always be some traces or particles of metal in oil - the important questions are: how much and which metal?

With 40 years' experience to draw

upon, a huge database of metallic wear conditions has been compiled allowing the MIG team to pinpoint which particular component the metal came from - allowing the scientists in turn to advise the front-line units whether the engine or gearbox needs to be replaced.

The system works. "I've been working here for 24 years and I have never lost an aircraft on my watch due to a predictable failure," says the head of the 'wear debris analysis' team (the nature of their work means the MIG-ers must remain anonymous).

That, of course, does not mean that helicopters have not been lost for manifold reasons over the past half century.

Most people will have heard of the Air Accidents Investigation Branch. Perhaps less well known is

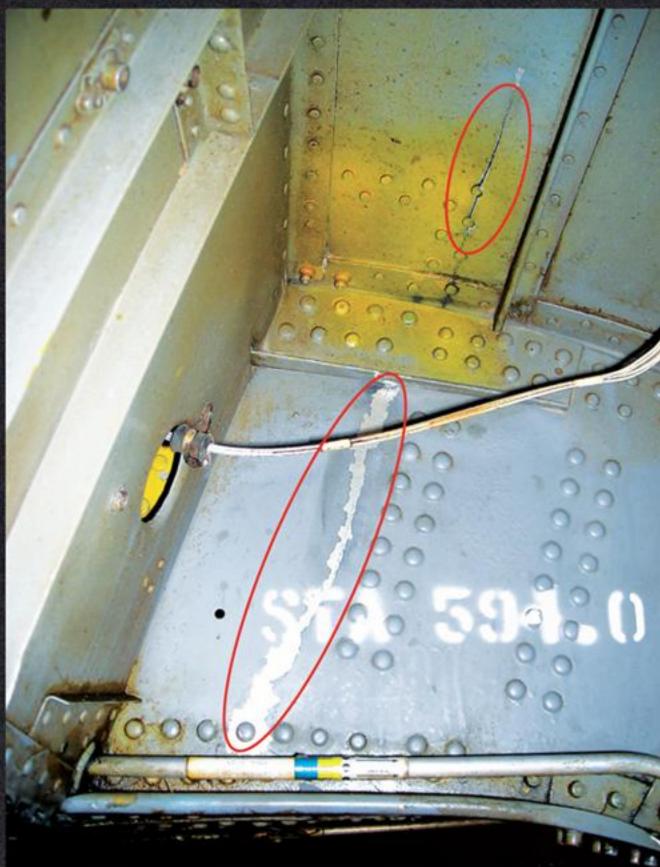
the scientific work done by the MIG team. Their aim is the same, however: to assist in determining the cause of an aircraft crash.

"The \$50,000 question is: was the damage caused by the crash or did it actually cause the crash?," explains one of the scientific investigators.

Take a Lynx which came down heavily on Salisbury Plain: its tail rotor drive shaft - vital for the aircraft's stability - had failed.

Was it the heavy landing which caused it or had it failed before the Lynx came down? An inspection from the MIG experts determined it was the former... and thankfully it wasn't a problem across the entire Lynx fleet.

"One simple indication is the filaments in the lights on a warning panel. If they can prove to have been heated at the time of a crash, then that's an indication that one



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Squadron engineers carry out regular servicing, but they also send regular samples containing small metal particles in the oil worn from the bearings and gears, back to Gosport.

Here, using processes the Mk1 from ranging sophisticated Eyeball, to analytical equipment such as spectrometers and electron microscopes, the samples are analysed for what should - and shouldn't - be there. Such is the nature of engines

and gearboxes that there will always be some traces or particles of metal in oil - the important questions are: how much and which metal?

With 40 years' experience to draw

upon, a huge database of metallic wear conditions has been compiled allowing the MIG team to pinpoint which particular component the metal came from - allowing the scientists in turn to advise the front-line units whether the engine or gearbox needs to be replaced.

The system works. "I've been working here for 24 years and I have never lost an aircraft on my watch due to a predictable failure," says the head of the 'wear debris analysis' team (the nature of their work means the MIG-ers must remain anonymous).

That, of course, does not mean that helicopters have not been lost for manifold reasons over the past half century.

Most people will have heard of the Air Accidents Investigation Branch. Perhaps less well known is

the scientific work done by the MIG team. Their aim is the same, however: to assist in determining the cause of an aircraft crash.

"The \$50,000 question is: was the damage caused by the crash or did it actually cause the crash?," explains one of the scientific investigators.

Take a Lynx which came down heavily on Salisbury Plain: its tail rotor drive shaft - vital for the aircraft's stability - had failed.

Was it the heavy landing which caused it or had it failed before the Lynx came down? An inspection from the MIG experts determined it was the former... and thankfully it wasn't a problem across the entire Lynx fleet.

"One simple indication is the filaments in the lights on a warning panel. If they can prove to have been heated at the time of a crash, then that's an indication that one Picture: Lt Chris Simpson, 814 NAS

A wave from an aircrewman as a Merlin from the Flying Tigers

performs in rather murky skies over Britannia Royal Naval College

during Dartmouth Regatta

Show-stoppers

AFTER last month's appearance at the Tall Ship's parade in Liverpool and Meet Your Navy in Portsmouth, the spotlight continued to focus on HMS Argyll.

The frigate was named as guardship for the four-day Dartmouth Regatta, the annual festival of sail in the shadow of the alma mater of the naval officer corps.

She wasn't the sole RN asset on display. The Flying Tigers (814 NAS) sent a Merlin to perform a ten-minute show over the Devonshire town and the Black Cats, the RN's Lynx display team, also dropped in.

causing some aerial displays (including a parachute jump) to be cancelled.

And the RAF muscled in on RN 'home turf' by dispatching (1) the Battle of Britain memorial flight to raise the curtain on the regatta, (2) a Eurofighter Typhoon for a demonstration of raw - and roar - power and (3) the Red Arrows to wow crowds on the busiest day of the festival.

That's enough of the Crabs, for they weren't the only ones making noise in Dartmouth. Argyll fired an 11-gun salute as she arrived on the river, before opening her decks to the public, who arrived by passenger boat from the shore. More than 2,000 people made the trip, while Sea Cadets were treated to guided tours.

The regatta transforms an otherwise fairly sleepy coastal town into a hustling, bustling trap for tourists and sailors.

Not all the sporting activity occurs on the Dart, however. An all-ranks tug of war team headed ashore and almost lifted the trophy, coming second of 16 sides hauling and straining.

On a more formal level, Argyll hosted an official dinner for dignitaries, plus a flight deck reception for local VIPs. After a high-profile drugs bust (see page 6), the

the west coast of Scotland for NATO war games first visit to her affiliated city of Glasgow. before paying her Back on the south coast, another regatta hosted not one but two vessels:

HMS Tyne and RFA Mounts Bay. Both were in the Cornish port of Fowey (as were the Red Arrows), with landing craft ferrying tourists out to the auxiliary - at

16,000 tons she's far too large to come alongside.

Meanwhile in Wales... There was no regatta for HMS Cornwall, just three well-deserved days at Cardiff's Britannia Quay – a visit which coincided with Sea Sunday, a celebration/commemoration of the lives of seafarers. Cornwall also opened her gangway to visitors and invited local Sea Cadets

And let's not forget Northern Ireland. The Sea Cadets certainly didn't as they

staged their national regatta in Carrickfergus... something which demanded a sizeable RN presence. Survey ship HMS Enterprise - recently seen in Belfast Bay - was the largest,

if not necessarily loudest, Senior Service asset on show. For a start, the Commando Display Team showed the good folk of Northern

Ireland the art of unarmed combat.

And their musical comrades were in action throughout the weekend. The Corps of Drums performed at Bangor's Clifton School before a full RM Band staged a concert in the town's conference centre for Seafarers UK and the Sea Cadets.

That wasn't the end to the Corps' musical input at the regatta; there were two daytime concerts to perform before a Beat Retreat brought the curtain down on the festival, accompanied by a firework and laser display.



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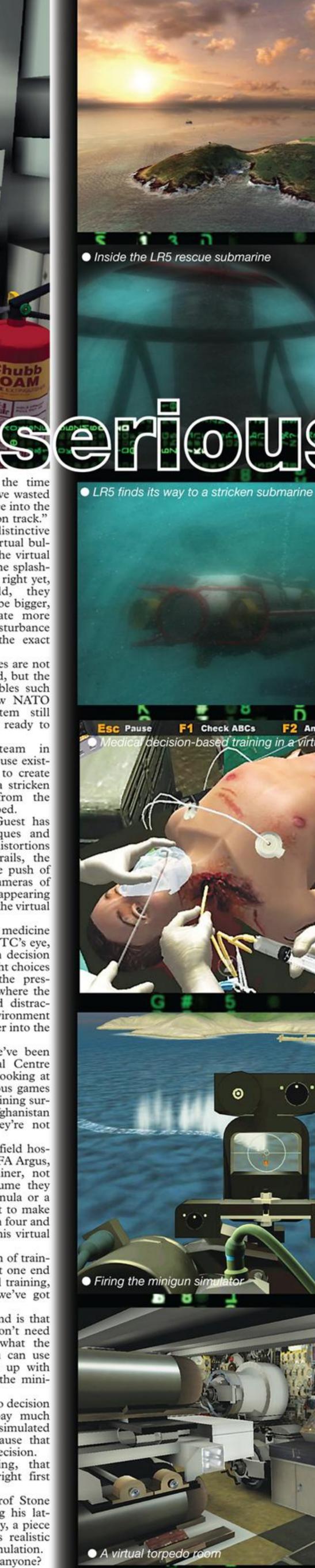
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NAVY NEWS, OCTOBER 2008

and a variety of tasks designed to improve command and leadership skills.

Members of the RNR's Above Water Force Protection (AWFP) branch trained on board to further develop their weapons and combat techniques, allowing them to provide a deterrent force capable of guarding ships anywhere in the world in times of heightened threat levels.

The RNR Air Branch took over RFA Fort Austin's flight deck for the weekend, and more than 20 reservists experienced the terrifying but exhilarating feeling of being suspended over the ocean on a light jackstay between Fort Austin and HMS Cumberland as the two ships steamed along the Channel.

Sport also had a place, including a fiercely-contested deck hockey competition which ostensibly aimed to develop teamwork.

The RN sport features a rope ring for a puck, making it closer to ice hockey than the field version -

mixed hockey," said Lt Parry.

And the reservists even found time for that all important naval tradition on Saturday evening the SODS (Ship's Operatic and Dramatic Society) Opera - which proved to be a huge success, despite (or perhaps because of) the variable quality of the participants.

By Sunday lunch-time the whole

thing was over.

"Everyone is shattered but it's time to change hats and become a civilian again," said Lt Parry.

"Soon I will be heading off back home and then to the office for the normal Monday morning routine.

"Sometimes it's just a bit surreal - 'good weekend - what did you get up to?' most colleagues ask as part of the post weekend return to work ritual.

"Flew in a helicopter, hung out in the middle of the Channel (literally), put out a few fires and

"Most colleagues don't bother asking anymore. I wonder why?" Cdr David Kay, Maritime

Reserves Staff Officer for the South West, said: "This was a most successful training event for the South West's Maritime Reserves, and hugely enjoyable."

Cdre Miller added: "Nothing beats training naval personnel afloat, no matter if they are regular or reserve.

"RFA Fort Austin, as the RFA 'flagship' training ship, was the ideal platform for my requirements with the ship performing superbly.

"The professional and enthusiastic participation of her ship's company in all the weekend's activities has made this the success it has been.

"And HMS Cumberland, despite the rigours of OST, provided a fantastic range of services too.

"This has been the best regional training exercise since the days of MCM 10 mustering off Gibraltar."







• (left) A trials gunboat variant of the Offshore Raiding Craft is put the paces at RM Instow; (above) the Beast turns back the Devonshire wave driving through the dip tank in an adapted Land-Rover

amoino: Hagooy

ROYAL MARINES Instow is a unique location. Everyone says so.

Everyone down there will tell you it is because of the seven distinct and distinctive types of beach, terrain and water around

But it's also unique because of the distinct and distinctive types of work done down here.

Part research centre, part training base, part trials unit;

part Royal Marine, part civil servant, and a little bit RN; part land vehicles, part boats; part amphibious bit-of-both - it's almost impossible to label RM Instow, writes Helen Craven.

But all these separate cogs are an essential part of the Royal Marines' war-machine. Take any one of them away, and somewhere on a distant shore you risk the Marines grinding to a halt.

Major John Lugg, the man in

charge at Instow, states it simply: "If we don't get it right here, those big ships couldn't get the landing force ashore. The UK's amphibious excellence starts here."

There may be some people in the Navy who dispute that. But it is a simple fact.

Amphibious ships exist to deliver the punch of the Royal Marines to the shore.

There are two ways that can

happen, by air with the skills of the Commando Helicopter Force - if bulk and weight and timescales aren't prohibitive.

Or by sea.

And at some point those big ships hand over their charges to those small boats that cross the shallow waters from sea to shore.

nd 11 Amphibious Trials and Training at Instow, part of 1 Assault Group RM, is focused on all the means and methods that make that journey from ship to shore and beyond the beach possible.

"If it has to cross the beach," explained Maj Lugg, "we have to know it can survive a depth of 1.5m of water."

It means that 11ATT have to make sure that the right kit exists

to make that journey at the best speed with the least risk.

It means that 11ATT have to make sure that the vehicles, trucks, heavy plant that come ashore for a landing can make that shallow crossing from boat to beach. And ask anyone - seawater is the enemy of engines.

It means that 11ATT have to make sure that any Marine driving those vehicles knows how to waterproof the engine and kit, drive from the steep ramp of a shifting landing craft headlong into waves at depths of up to man height in

the pitch-black of night.

And so to my first bit of firstperson experience...

The Land-Rover tips slightly and water starts flooding in around my ankles. In seconds it's up to my chest and the windscreen is nothing but a wall of murky green

This is the third time I've been through this, but this time I'm the one in the driving seat.

A driving seat from which the water is trying to lift me; the same pressure of water is depriving me of the familiar feel of the accelerator pedal.

"Put your foot down," says the marine next to me cheerfully. So I do, as the specially-adapted Land-Rover surges back up the steep slope and onto dry land again.

"Now imagine doing that from a moving landing craft, against surging waves, in the dark."

At Royal Marines Instow the dip tank is an early visit in driver training. Over the course of my one-day visit, I'll return to the dip tank in bigger and bigger vehicles.

The BRV (or Beast as it's commonly called by Marines) is a particularly striking transit, its Leopard-tank base rears about the slope before the Beast pivots down to land with a satisfying thud upon its tracks.

It was dramatic enough on the inside of the cab, I've no notion what it looked like to an outsider.

Although the men and women who work at Instow are no longer easily impressed by such feats; day in, day out, LandRovers, Vikings, Pinzgauers, MAN trucks, Beasts, prototypes, trial vehicles, demonstrators, WW2 DUKWs roar into and out of the dip tank on their way to acceptance, trials, training or the various other tasks that are undertaken in this North Devon camp.

Its out-of-the-way location misleads into an out-of-the-way perception. This is no sleepy hollow, no backwater of dozing dotage.

The vast BRV is under the careful guardianship of Vehicle Mechanic Steve Bailey. Its function is inherent in its full name - beach recovery vehicle, using its hefty weight and impressive strength to pull or push vehicles, landing craft, even tanks to shore or back out to sea.

At Instow it is used for training the green beret Vehicle Mechanics; and to train the landing craft drivers; and to recover brokendown vehicles; oh and there's only a handful of them in service, and the only people

who know how to look after them, how to machine the necessary parts, how to drive them are all in Instow. They're also the ones who checked out the BRV before it was allowed into service.

"I've got a certain amount of pride in these," admitted Steve, trying to avert his eyes from the distractions of sea water dripping inside his pristine charge.

He should have pride in the BRV. This man knows everything there is to know about the Beast. Although he might not have built it in the first place, the manufacturers who did are now out of business - so if any of the four Beasts needs fixing, tweaking or replacement parts, Instow is where the expertise lies.

"The old Centurion BARV was considerably lighter, with the driver ultimately underwater relying on the commander to guide him. It was a bit of a crew nightmare.

"The Centurion was a demanding bit of kit. But with this the crew comfort is fantastic, and the reliability is very good."

he sandy beach at Instow, from a holidaymaker's eye, looks rather lovely (particularly if you like watching men in green berets). But for landing craft men it offers the worst case scenario for a beach landing – a long shallow rise of

Nearby there are steep shelving beaches, pebble shores, mud flats and riverine crossings, open sea with heavy surf, dune-strewn training areas, and sheltered coastlines that can be used in almost any conditions.

There's nowhere else like this in the UK offering all these training, trialling and experimenting challenges on the doorstep.

Out at sea craft and vessels are also being put through their paces by the combination of marines, engineers and specialists that are housed within Instow's fence.

An Offshore Raiding Craft (ORC) bristling with guns is being thrown about in the sheltered waters - this is a possible new configuration for the ORC that's worth is being judged by the men of Instow. ("Being bootnecks we wanted guns on it," I'm told succinctly.)

This is a gunboat variant with the driver's console moved amidships, and a heavy cladding of armour around its hull.

To me, it looks impressive. But for the Marines on board, there are real tactical issues that have to be resolved. "The expertise here is second

 (top left) A MAN military truck's ability to cope with salt water is tested at Instow from an LCU; the Beast (or BRV) pulls an LCVP ashore









to none, the team are renowned for their abilities," said Maj Lugg. "These guys look at a piece of equipment and if it doesn't come up to scratch, they will say so."

Is it actually going to be fast enough with all that weight of armour? What's the visibility like for the boat driver? Do the gunners have the line of sight they need? Is their footing secure on the tilting, slithery deck?

Because this thing can just stop. Throw the lever and the buckets that propel the thing forward through waterjets are thrown into reverse. And it smashes to a crash-stop in the length of the boat.

And a handbrake turn at sea is something impressive to behold. And slightly alarming to experience.

In November 2006 a rigid raider came under attack in Iraq, with members of the patrol killed and injured. The call came back to Instow to find a solution now.

From early starts to midnight finishes, and even overnight, the marines, the engineers, the craftsmen of Instow toiled together to stop this happening again.

Six weeks later another raider came under attack – 71 blast fragments slammed into the boat. And no one was injured.

Thanks to the armour cladding developed through the long hours, the hard work, and the technical know-how of the men and women at Instow.

Sgt Maj 'Spud' Bartlett was in that first boat. Now he's one of the 14 Royal Marines at 11ATT who are bringing their frontline experience to bear on the men, boats and vehicles that pass through Instow.

Their operational know-how is balanced by the corporate knowledge of the 47 civilians who research, design, drive, build and maintain the vehicles at the site.

Pete Moore of the Craft wing said: "The armouring of the raiders was an urgent, out-of-the-blue job. But that's what we're here for. It's one of the more rewarding ones – we get to see the effect of our work very quickly. There's instant feedback."

It's a point echoed by many of the civilians working at the base.

"One of the pleasures of this job is that we're very close to the end user," said Syd Kyte.

Syd's particular area of expertise lies with the massive Case tractors that lay the trackway along the beach, the coiled carpets of linked metal that permit less hefty vehicles the grip to cross the sand, shale, pebbles or mud of the shoreline.

After hearing comments from the Marines who had come to Instow about the difficulties of hauling in the metal track, Syd

and his team engineered a bit of kit to make their lives easier. It meets with firm approval among the Marines using it.

he military wing and HQ support the three delivery wings, individually responsible for training, craft and vehicles. But individual doesn't really factor into life at Instow, because almost every serial is made up of a mix of the base's wings.

Getting a driver to take his water-proofed Land-Rover off a landing craft and to the shore calls on training wing, and craft wing, and vehicle wing, and military wing, and HQ – to make sure all the different moving parts are available at the same time.

But then, amphibious warfare is all about getting all the moving parts to the right places at the right time.

To that end, early next year Instow is expecting the arrival of the trials demonstrator of the future Fast Landing Craft.

A full-size Pacscat (partially aircushioned supported catamaran) is being built currently in Southampton, and the finished craft (part conventional LCU, part catamaran, part hovercraft) will be sent down to Instow to be put through its paces.

David Graham, a former Royal Marine who heads up the Craft Wing, explained: "What we're looking at here is something that hasn't been done before.

"The doctrine these days is to launch over the horizon – for protection and tactical surprise."

The aim is to find a landing craft that can deliver a main battletank ashore at 25 knots, and get off the beach again at speed.

"So we're building a technology
demonstrator for
Pacscat. Because
we don't actually
know that it's going
to work. The theory
says it will."

He adds: "We spend most of our time finding c o m m e r c i a l solutions to military problems."

He admits to some fundamental differences between the two – "While they spend their time trying not to run aground, that's exactly what we have to do. We have to run aground, but in a controlled manner."

Instow stands outside of industry, pulling in knowledge from across defence, Qinetiq, DSTL, Abbey Wood, and to big business beyond – "I don't care who makes it, so long as it works and the Ministry can afford it," states David. "I see our strength as being this mix of technical knowledge and operational experience – and we're tied to nobody."

But it's not just the big bits of kit like landing craft being watched over here. The team at Instow have recently brought into service a handheld electronic navigation system, small enough and sturdy enough to be of practical use to Marines in small raiding craft.

And from the depths of a goldmine in South Africa, 11ATT plucked a piece of hydrography technology that they adapted into a beach profiler – in Norway earlier this year it proved itself, producing a swift detailed readout of the shallows that are essential for beach reconnaissance.

t doesn't take long at Instow to realise how this small corner of Devon is watching the world and continually bringing lessons back to improve the lives of the Royal Marines.

How an organisation that cherishes vintage World War 2 DUKWs as the best craft to support its training is bringing in cutting-edge technology to sharpen the war machine.

How this tiny, motley crew of civil servants and Marines are mapping out a future for amphibious warfare.

How much fun they are all having.

What the hell, how much fun I'm having, as I clamber up into a MAN truck for my fourth 'dip' of the day...

• (Top right) The Beast leaves the dip tank after rinsing off the Instow sea-water; a Land-Rover loses its unwanted cargo of water after a quick dip; and the Case with its spool of trackway works on the shallow Instow

Pictures: Greg Barrott, 11 ATT Sqn

shore





 Veterans of Operation Banner are joined by VIPs at a service of commemoration at St Paul's Cathedral in London Picture: Harland Quarrington (MOD)

Service reflects on Operation Banner

A SERVICE at St Paul's Cathedral has been held to commemorate the work and sacrifices of more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces who served in Northern Ireland.

Some 2,000 veterans of Operation Banner were joined by the Prince of Wales, the Duchess of Cornwall, Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Baroness Thatcher in a ceremony which reflected on the efforts of Service personnel and civil servants to bring peace to the Province over 38 years, many of whom paid with their lives.

Buglers of the Royal Marines Band, Portsmouth, sounded the Last Post when the congregation remembered the 763 servicemen and women who died on Operation Banner

St Paul's was packed with uniformed service personnel from across the Services and covering all ages.

Prince Charles wore full ceremonial uniform. - his own regiment, The Royal Regiment of Wales, was the first unit deployed to the streets of Northern Ireland at the start of Operation Banner in 1969.

Dr Richard Chartres, the Bishop of London gave a sermon during the service, and a representative of each of the Armed Forces gave a reading.

A memorial candle, bearing the name of the operation, was blessed before being lit by Mary Moreland, who was widowed as a result of terrorism in 1988.

The candle symbolised all member of the Forces who were killed in the Troubles.

Following the service 700 veterans marched through the city to the London Guildhall. The Prince of Wales took the salute.

Defence Secretary Des Browne,

who also attended the ceremony, said: "Today we pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of Servicemen and women who served on this operation and to the enormous contribution that they made towards a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

"They served with the characteristic determination, selflessness and professionalism that typify our Armed

"In particular today we remember, with humility, gratitude and respect, those who lost their lives on Operation Banner.

"The nation's debt to them and to the loved ones who survive them is immeasurable. Their sacrifice must never be forgotten."

Between 1969 and 2007, 763 servicemen and women were killed as a direct result of terrorism, including 651 Army and Royal Marines personnel and one RN Serviceman.

A further 6,116 members of the Army and Royals were wounded.

At its peak in the early 1970s Operation Banner saw 27,000 military personnel stationed in Northern Ireland, in 106 military bases or locations.

The process of steadily reducing military presence began on August 1 2005 when Peter Hain, then Northern Ireland Secretary, announced that the security situation had improved and routine military support to the police would no longer be needed.

But the operation officially ended on July 31 2007, when it was superseded by Operation Helvetic, a garrison of no more than 5,000 military personnel in ten locations.

The names of the UK personnel who lost their lives during Operation Banner are listed on the Armed Forces Memorial, Staffordshire.

Millies up for grabs

THE Sun newspaper has teamed up with the Ministry of Defence to celebrate excellence in the Armed Forces.

Nominations for the inaugural Sun Military Awards - aka the Millies - closed at the end of last month in categories which included Best Recruit, Life Saver Award, True Grit (individual and group), Best Armed Forces Animal and Most Outstanding Sailor or Royal Marine.

Most of the awards are open to public nomination, though a panel will determine who wins the Judges' Award for Special Recognition.

The awards are the brainchild of the Prince of Wales, who sees them as a chance for the public to recognise some of the work and achievements of the Forces and

Sun Defence Editor Tom Newton Dunn said of the awards: "With so many facing danger away from their families in Iraq or Afghanistan, seldom has the need been greater to give them the recognition they deserve.

"Like us, Prince Charles believes it is time to celebrate British troops' extraordinary character, selflessness and dedication - as a heartfelt token of our gratitude to them.

"The 12 award categories have been carefully chosen to represent every field of military endeavour."



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up in one day to the Sports, Amenities and Benevolence Scheme (SABS), the payroll giving scheme which provides funds to RN and RM charities.

The impressive haul of 70 people was netted by a team of seven earnest champions of SABS, led by Lt Cdr Tim Finch, during a families day at the base, means over £3,600 to swell the charity coffers.

■ DUNCAN Gell from Clyde Naval Base climbed upon his bike to pedal 325 miles from Dumbarton to Derby, finishing the journey in 20 hours 30 minutes, and pulling in a total of £700 for Glasgow Royal Infirmary's Burns Unit.

And all this pedalling began at the end of a full day of work as a Rolls Royce engineer at the Scottish base.

Duncan said: "I had rain, thunder, lightning, wind everything the British weather could throw at me. I had originally hoped to complete the distance in 18 hours, but given the conditions I'm not too disappointed.

"Especially as I got a bit lost in the rush hour in Manchester with roadworks and traffic lights."

■ CHEERS to the buccaneers - the Fleet Air Arm Buccaneer Association are celebrating next year's centenary with a rather special drop of malt.

There are two limited editions being produced, Speyside single malt aged 25 years and aged 50 years - with profits from the sales going to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, Naval charities and a memorial to all ranks at the National Arboretum.

Find out more at the association's website www. faaba.co.uk.

MOTORSPORT fans at the British Super Bike Championships in Fife got to see a race between a motorcar and a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter.

On the track was Lt Cdr Martin Lanni, and in the air Lt James Bullock and PO Daz Craig, all three men from the Search and Rescue unit at HMS Gannet in Prestwick; and all three men about to clamber into the car before wending 10,000km eastwards in a six-day drive between Glasgow and St Petersburg.

The men are raising money for the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Glasgow and the Number 1 Hospital in St Petersburg.

■ THE MEN and women of Liverpool University Royal Naval Unit (URNU) mustered £1,000 as a donation to the NSPCC.

The Liverpool unit has been a longstanding supporter of local charities, and this donation will help fund the new Hargreaves Centre in Liverpool, which provides therapeutic services to children and families affected by domestic violence or substance abuse.

■ FRATTON Live at Home, the charity which supports elderly people who want to live at home, has benefitted from a donation of £6,000 from HMS Excellent.

The Portmouth branch of the charity has been the focus of fundraising events at Excellent this year.

■ FALLING off Everest is never

advisable. But former Naval man Peter Baker is about to leap from an aircraft 29,500ft in the sky in front of Everest, raising money for charity Global Angels, which supports children's projects in the Himalayan region.

If you would like to pledge your support to the former Leading Air Mechanic, who left the service in 1973, visit http:// www.mycharitypage.com/ PeterBakerEverestSkydive. Peter has paid for the jump himself, all donations will go to charity.



in brief Meeting Max Metaling a record with Meeting Max



 Max Hubbuck watched an action-packed VIP protection display from the Royal Marines of 40 Commando during Meet your Navy in Portsmouth Naval Base Picture: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson

CANCER sufferer Max Hubbuck enjoyed a full day at Meet your Navy in Portsmouth Naval Base, courtesy of the hard work of Christine Harper, a researcher at the RN Historical Branch.

Max, who is aged just 12, has just finished chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment at Great Ormond Street Hospital since being diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma in March 2007.

Christine heard about Max from his father Alex who was installing new equipment at the Historical Branch.

Christine set to work to organise free tickets to Meet your Navy for the whole family, and find overnight accommodation at the Langstone Hotel in Hayling Island for the Hertfordshire-based family.

Max's day with the Navy included witnessing a VIP rescue by the Close Protection Team of 40 Commando and a tour of the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious, where he spent some time in the cockpit of a Merlin helicopter from 824 Naval Air Squadron.

Christine said: "I felt that the Navy could help. If I had to go and beg a few favours, I was determined to do it.

"I'm more than happy to put a smile on to a small chap's face."

This wasn't Max's first experience of the Navy as assault ship HMS Albion welcomed him as a special guest during a visit to the Thames earlier this year.

Christine added: "It went very well. The whole family was here for the whole day. They really did me proud.

"The hotel helped so much by providing accommodation, which I'm sure made all the difference because it meant it was a break for all the family.

"It was really nice to set it up for Max and his sisters Alexandra and Georgia too."



RM Musician Tom Griffin drops 192m from the Auckland

Long drop on Long Look

MUSICIAN Tom Griffin from the RM Band Service took advantage of a long trip overseas on Exercise Long Look to carry out a long drop from the Auckland Skytower.

Tom spent five months in New Zealand on the military exchange programme, joining the Royal New Zealand Navy Band.

Tom jumped the 192m to raise funds for Starship Children's Hospital in central Auckland.

His plunge from the sky was serenaded by fellow members of the Navy Band who played melodies to inspire and support.

Tom now has his feet firmly back on the ground and back in the UK.

Naval force turns into ground force

THERE'S been a general taking -up of spades and clearing of weeds by both airmen and sailors of the Royal Navy.

Culdrose-based 824 NAS left behind their high-tech Merlins for a spot of manual labour at Nancealverne School in Cornwall.

The airmen set to work sprucing up a remembrance garden that had been damaged by vandals, making safe an aged roundabout in the playground, and restoring the felt roof of a garden shed that was used to store the children's

Lt Nick Bates of 824 NAS said: "This was a hugely well-received and worthwhile project that provided necessary help to the local community.

"The school expressed their great gratitude, and the maintenance team enjoyed several days out of their squadron routine to do new things and meet new people."

Meanwhile up in Sutherland, local lass Lt Lorna Cooper led her own ground-force team from HMS Sutherland to brighten up a popular public footpath.

Lorna, who is from the village of Lairg, said: "We on Sutherland are extremely proud of the links we have with the county.

"Having been in refit, we were really looking forward to getting away and giving something back to the local community.

The Deputy Logistics Officer added: "And since I grew up nearby, I used my local knowledge to ensure the lads working on the project fully appreciated all that Sutherland has to offer."



picture of wealth

IMAGES of the battlegrounds of Afghanistan have become the source of fundraising for military charities.

PO Sean Clee, the Royal Navy's photographer of the year for the second year running, set up an exhibition of his photographs of the Royal Marines in Afghanistan at Plymouth's Masa Fine Art Gallery.

Several artists, including Steve Slimm, Graham Fish, Tony Common, David Gray,

David Wheeler and Celia Duncan, took Sean's photographs as inspiration for 45 paintings that accompanied the exhibition.

The auctions of the paintings and prints has raised over £10,000 for military charity Help for Heroes.

Sean said: "The exhibition has been fantastic - really good. We raised £8,500 on the first night.

"I chose Help for Heroes because they

are a military charity. It's close to the artwork that came from my time serving in Afghanistan.

"I know a few of the lads who were injured out there, so I chose a charity that would help them."

The exhibition will also have a special one-off display at Draper's Hall in London as part of a Trafalgar Night Dinner, raising more money for Seafarers UK.



Left to right: Ian McGinn, Ray McGinn and Ben McGinn

Seeing triple

THE McGINN brothers Ian and Ray are used to bumping into each other in the Navy - but now it looks like they could be seeing a third family member.

CPO Ian McGinn and brother PO Ray McGinn have both been in the Royal Navy for 18 years, and are both working at HMNB Clyde. But it seems the two brothers may soon have another family member to contend with - Ray's 14-year-old son Ben, a sea cadet with

TS Astute. Ben has his eyes set on the Senior Service, and after a visit to the naval base is determined to become a weapon engineer officer.

"I've really enjoyed the week. It was great to spend time with my dad and my uncle and see where they work and what they do," he said.

If Ben does achieve his dream of becoming an RN officer, the next time he comes across his dad and uncle, they may well be saluting



CPO Tania Ashton-Jones at the completed replica of the hut

Great recreate A CPO based at RAF Halton has

taken part as the one-woman RN contingent in a project to build a replica of the famous 'Great Escape' hut in Poland.

The hut, which was built at the site of prison camp Stalag Luft III, is half the size of the original and took two weeks to build.

CPO Tania Ashton-Jones was the only RN team member to take part, with the rest of the group comprised of RAF and Army personnel.

Tania said: "I've absolutely

loved it, it has been a real privilege and honour to be part of the whole team both in terms of building the hut and the visits to the historical sites."

Former Stalag Luft III Prisoners of War, Air Commodore (retired) Charles Clarke, president of the Ex-PoW Association and Andrew Wiseman were guests of honour at the opening of the hut.

Anyone interested in finding out more or donating to the project can do so by visiting the website at www.raf.mod.uk/project104.



The five Maasai warriors enjoying the sights at the Fleet Air Arm Museum

Achange

THEIR striking appearance has turned heads and even stopped traffic, but it was the turn of five Maasai warriors to be amazed after a visit to the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

The warriors - in full tribal gear - enjoyed a simulated flight in a Lynx helicopter, plus a visit onboard Concorde.

"The warriors were really excited at the opportunity to visit the museum, and seeing helicopters and fighter aircraft up close will be remembered by them for the rest of their lives," said Haymie, the warriors' UK guide.

By way of thanks, the five warriors later treated visitors to the museum with a five-minute display of tribal dance and song.

Jon Jefferies from the FAA Museum said: "The warriors were truly fantastic. Just as they won't forget us, we will certainly not forget them."

But it wasn't just the aircraft that proved alien to the visitors.

of the warriors, Kashu, asked: "Why aren't the pavements made of grass?"

Coming to terms with busy life in the UK, one

For more information about the Walking with the Maasai charity, you can check out the website at www.walkingwithmaasai.org

■ MEANWHILE, Lady Nadine Cobham visited the Fleet Air Arm Museum to unveil a portrait of her late husband.

The portrait of Sir Michael will hang permanently in the foyer of Cobham Hall, which was named after him in recognition of his long-running support for the building.

Museum director Graham Mottram said: "Sir Michael Cobham was a major figure within the aerospace industry for over 30 years and his contribution to the Fleet Air Arm Museum was enormous."

For more information about the museum, visit www.fleetairarm.com.

Never too young for nuclear

SCHOOLCHILDREN from across the UK have been offered the chance to gain an insight into nuclear engineering.

Fifty budding young engineers were invited to HMS Sultan in Gosport - where the Royal Navy trains its marine and nuclear engineers.

The Royal Navy and Babcock International Group teamed up with educational charity The Smallpeice Trust to run the fourday residential course for 13 and 14-year-old students.

Through a series of practical workshops and lectures, the students learned about nuclear power, and were able to stay overnight in HMS Bristol, in Portsmouth Harbour.

The Smallpeice Trust's Gemma Murphy said: "If we are to meet the future skills requirements, it's important for us to give students an understanding of engineering in this sector.

"It's encouraging to see such a keen interest from students who are currently contemplating their careers."

The nuclear marine engineering course is run as part of an ongoing programme of residential courses to help young people aged 13 to 18 to learn and develop skills in engineering, design, technology and manufacturing.

To find out more about the courses, you can visit the website online at www.smallpeicetrust.co.uk.

NOTTINGHAM Club spent the week at HMS Collingwood, Fareham, as part of their pre-season training.

The players spent their time using the variety of sports facilities at the base for the second year running.

Director of Rugby Glenn Delaney said: "The facilities at Collingwood are excellent, the set up is just what we need, and the food's good!"

■ RN PILOT Nigel Pearce is hanging up his flying gloves after 41 years in the Service.

Nigel, who has amassed an impressive 14,150 flying hours, leaves RNAS Yeovilton to take up a new role as a simulator instructor at Farnborough.

On completion of his final flight he was welcomed by members of Heron Flight, who presented him with a cake, and a welldeserved tot of Navy rum.

■ LT CDR Bruce Russell has achieved two of his greatest ambitions in the space of one

Not only has he taken over as the WEO onboard HMS Ambush, but he has also graduated from the Open University with a PhD in History.

"Most of my colleagues ask me why I put myself through the additional strain of a doctorate while also being in charge of the build programme of a new nuclear submarine.

"Quite simply, I wanted to set myself a personal challenge that was different to my naval career - and achieve it before my 40th birthday," explained Bruce.

A NAVAL officer has chalked up 50 years of dedicated Naval service.

Lt Cdr John Frazer Murray has recently celebrated five decades of service in the RN and RNZN.

Joining the RN in 1958, he served for 33 years before embarking on a career in the RNZN in 1991, encouraged by his participation in Exercise Longlook.

Now, a further 17 years down the line, he continues to serve in the Supply Branch in Auckland.

■ A CPO from Plymstock has been awarded a commendation from his CO in recognition of support offered to RN recruits.

CPO Phillip Carter received the commendation from Capt Jonathan Woodcock, the CO of HMS Raleigh, for his work at the Royal Navy Submarine School.

CPO Carter is responsible for mentoring the trainee submariners as they undergo their specialist training.

The award further recognises CPO Carter's work in helping raise the profile of the Submarine Service.

HMS VICTORY has found

herself a new CO, after Lt Cdr John Scivier left to join Flag Officer Sea Training in Devonport as Senior Air Traffic Controller. Taking over is Lt Cdr 'Oscar'

Whild, previously Portsmouth Naval Base's Ships Facilities Co-ordinator.

He said: "There are very few alive who have done this job so this really tops anything I have ever done.

"I am glad to be joining before Trafalgar Day; the biggest day in the ship's diary and indeed a significant one in our history."

■ THE STARGATE movie SG1: Continuum, recently broadcast on Sky1, was dedicated to the memories of LOM Paul McCann and OM Anthony Huntrod, the two submariners killed in an accident on board HMS Tireless in March 2007.

The sci-fi series was filming a special TV movie in the Arctic with the American submarine USS Alexandria which was working with Tireless when the accident took place.

White Spot stop off

FORTY members of the White Spot Pipe Band paid a visit to Clyde Naval Base, after coming all the way from Canada.

The youth band from Vancouver were in Scotland to take part in the World Pipe Band Championships at Glasgow Green, but stopped off at the naval base for

a tour. Duncan Bryden, a chef in the Senior Rates' Mess, invited the group after discovering that his cousin Margaret Callender and her son Alex, who is a member,

would be coming along too. "It was a great experience for the kids in the band to visit the base," said Duncan. "They were given a chance to experience the Pathfinder bridge simulator and the base's weapons simulator, as well as an opportunity to go out

on a boat.' The White Spot Pipe Band reached sixth place in the Juvenile Pipe Bands event at the Championships.

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Fees for families claiming the service boarding allowance are set so that for the current year parental contribution is only £1,815.



Every dog (and cat) has its day

SLEEK and dark, they wait near the Fife coast for their moment to serve...

No, not the submarines, but a litter of 11 inquisitive, black Labrador puppies, two of which will become explosives detection dogs for the MoD Police.

The potential new recruits are still at home with their owners, PC Evelyn Hardy and her husband Michael, an ex-submariner who now works offshore.

The energetic pups are all named after RN submarines, but still haven't quite mastered the art of stealth.

"We now have Superb, Opportune, Orpheus, Onyx, Onslaught, Odin, Oberon, Ursula, Spartan, Swiftsure and Vigilant running around our back garden causing absolute mayhem," said Evelyn.

"We toyed with the idea of naming them after Egyptian gods, but then my husband Michael suggested submarines and it seemed like a really good idea - rather fitting as he's an ex-submariner."

Two of the puppies - the aptly named Swiftsure and Vigilant are heading for specialist training in order to take their place as explosives detection dogs.

They will be trained at the Force's dog training centre at Wethersfield in Essex.

"It is quite likely that the dogs may then find a permanent work home at the RN Armaments Depot at Coulport, which is nice for me to think of, as that's where I was a dog-handler from 1985-92," commented Evelyn.

"It's a job I really loved and quite miss, so to think that two of our pups will be over there is great.'

■ ELSEWHERE, sailors at Clyde Naval Base revealed their animalloving side when they launched a rescue operation to save the life of

a tiny kitten. The five-week-old feline was spotted in the clutches of a savage lesser black-beaked gull, which had taken her from her litter at the

base. The onlookers watched as she was then dropped onto a barrier of razor wire at the south end of the base.

Quick to react, the sailors called for the help of Pest Control Officer



 Pest Control Officer John Belshaw with the injured kitten Blackie Picture: LA(Phot) Gary 'Geordie' Weathers

John Belshaw and MoD PC David Duffton, who sped to the aid of the tiny creature.

"I have seen gulls take ducklings before, but never a kitten," said John.

The pair were later joined by the RN's Environmental Health

Officer Surg Cdr Richard Webber. While the kitten - dubbed Blackie – was fortunate, her three siblings were later found missing from their litter.

"I'd put money on it being the same gull," John added.

After having her paws stitched, Blackie is expected to make a full recovery, and has even been offered a new home by David, the PC who helped rescue her.

Not on the scrapheap

SOME of you might remember the Navy's Scrapheap Challenge team who came so close to grabbing the grand title a few years back.

Well, undaunted CPO 'JJ' Swift of Southern Diving Unit 1 and Lt Cdr Jim Ellis of FOST are returning to the fray, with new teammate CPO Dickie Bird of SFM Defiance.

This time there's a new approach to the next series of the Channel 4 show, with a field of over 50 teams contending for the top title in events taking place around the country.

But JJ is quietly confident: "I'm hoping we're going to do well. But it's a pretty good challenge."

The new series is expected to be broadcast in the New Year.

An eye on the coast

AGED 78 many people would be winding down, but not Ernie Smith.

He is the newest qualified Professional Watchkeeper with the National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) in Gosport.

The former Master at Arms spent 27 years in the Royal Navy, and is well known as the author of the excellent HMS Belfast Men of the Sea.

He said: "I had served in HMS Dolphin in the early 1960s, and it is certainly a nostalgia trip to work in Fort Blockhouse again."

Ernie was, perhaps unsurprisingly, the oldest trainee in the NCI, where he has joined a number of other Naval veterans.

All watchkeepers must successfully complete 12 weeks of training in subjects such as navigation, tidal reaches and radio competence before qualification.

The NCI is a voluntary organisation that keeps a visual watch over UK shores with 49 stations manned by 1,700 watchkeepers.

The fully-trained volunteers man the stations during daylight



 Graham Piggett, a former Naval CPO and now one of the National Coastwatch Institution watchkeepers at Fort Blockhouse

hours, watching over craft with problems like engine failures, or vulnerable small craft and canoe-

They log vessels, weather and tide conditions - all of which information is passed on to the

Maritime Coastguard Agency. The Gosport branch of the NCI is based in the old Signal Tower at Fort Blockhouse.

If perhaps a spot of sea (watching) time appeals to you, and you are aged between 18 and 80, contact Richard McMinn the station manager at Gosport NCI on 023 9258 8332 or richard mcminn@ hotmail.com.







Supporting its established national reputation for musical excellence, the School has a new £3.5m state-of-the-art music school due for completion in October 2008. Every pupil also has the opportunity to enjoy the outstanding sports facilities, including RYA sailing tuition, and to pursue a huge range of interests and activities.

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> The Royal Hospital School, Holbrook Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 2RX



The newly promoted sailors with their superiors

Making history

FORTY-TWO Engineering Technicians at the Maritime Warfare School (MWS) headed out on summer leave after making history.

Each one of the sailors has been promoted, in the largest known requestman, and the first of the ET(WE) Branch.

A total of 19 LETs were promoted to APO, while five ETs were promoted to LET and 18 ETs were promoted to Acting LET.

Cdre Steve Kirkby, CO of

HMS Collingwood, presented the sailors with their certificates.

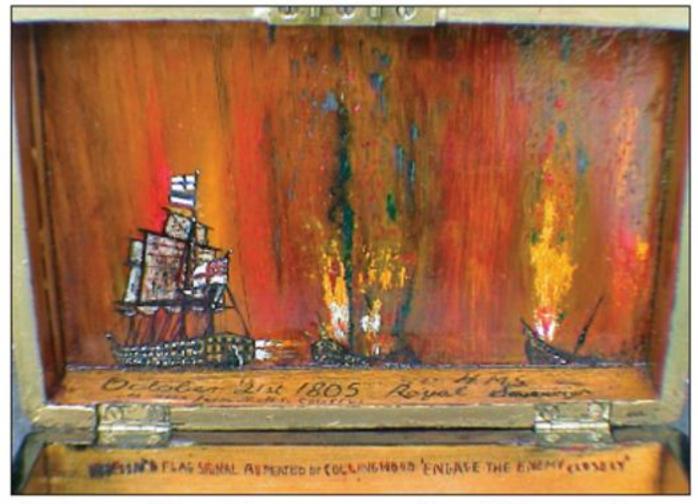
He told them: "Never before have we done this number in my memory and I do believe it is unlikely to be done again.

"There might be lots of you but each and every one of you has fully earned your promotion."

The sailors were all promoted while still on course, rather than on completion, which makes the achievement even more impressive.



For further information contact: The Headmaster, The Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover, Kent, CT15 5EQ. Tel: +0044 (0)1304 245024 Mil: 94284 5024 Fax: +0044 (0)1304 245019 Mil Fax: 94284 5019 E-mail: headmaster@doyrms.com Website: www.doyrms.mod.uk



Trafalgar tribute

THE GROVE Review of The Life of Admiral Lord Collingwood (September) reminds me that we still have an empty plinth in Trafalgar Square and one man is missing, although he lies in state alongside Admiral Nelson in St Paul's.

It is, of course, Collingwood, who was not even able to attend Nelson's funeral because he was at sea and did not return to England for the next five years.

Collingwood's ship, the Royal Sovereign, engaged the enemy some 53 minutes before the Victory.

Although outnumbered five to one and more or less surrounded, Royal Sovereign's firing rate was so fast that the ship quickly reduced two ships to waterline burning hulks and killed within minutes several hundred crew and officers.

I had a relative on board the Colossus, which was fifth in line behind the Royal Sovereign, and inside his letter-box was a portrayal of a scene in battle (shown above) as seen from the Colossus, which in the box is spelt Coloffus in the old manner of writing 's'.

Collingwood is repeating Nelson's last signal to him (when his ship was hard at it and Victory was still to join the battle) 'Engage the enemy closely.' Collingwood had, upon seeing the signal, hoisted two black balls to his friend and

IN HIS letter Polar Heroes (Sep-

tember) Michael O'Brien remarks

that Kevin Walton's family is

thought to be unique in that both

he and his son have been awarded

Jonathan's medal (for 1986) is

the most recent such award (his

father's being for 1946-47), there

have been three other father/son

received the medal for his work as a

cartographer during the Australian

Antarctic Expedition in 1912-14, whilst his son Robert received his

medal, with two clasps, for his part

in a French expedition in 1952

and for another Australian expedi-

tion in 1954-55. Both these, like

bronze medal awards - Lt William

Colbeck RNR commanded the

relief ship Morning for Scott's

first expedition in 1902-04, whilst

his son William R Colbeck, also a

Lieutenant RNR, was Navigating

Officer of Discovery during

research expeditions off Antarctica

in 1929-31.

There were also two sets of

the Waltons', are silver medals.

The Australian, George Dovers,

Although it is true that his son

the Polar Medal.

awards.

then quickly hauled them down as he hoisted the repeat of white field blue cross flag, superior to, horizontal stripes blue, white and red flag.

You may notice that all the British ships had white stripes and bands so as to be seen through the smoke even on the rudder posts.

Gerald Morris

...ON Sunday October 19, the White Ensign will fly over Exeter Cathedral during the annual service to celebrate Lord Nelson's great victory at Trafalgar 203 years ago.

The first lesson will be read by Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, and the second by Cdr Paul Brown, CO of HMS Exeter.

Music will be provided by the Band of HM Royal Marines from the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone and before the service the ship's company of HMS Exeter will be exercising their Freedom of the City by marching through the city's streets to the cathedral. They will be joined by over 75 Sea Cadets from all over Devon and some CCF units from the county's schools.

Everybody is welcome to come to the service, which starts at 1130, or ring me for more details on 01803 215959.

- Cdr Rory Jackson, Torquay

The other pair of bronze med-

als were to a father and son,

both named Alexander Smith,

who served in Scott's Terra Nova

in 1903-04 as Carpenter and

there have also been uncle/nephew

awards, as well as two husband/

wife awards - Mr Walter Harland

(1977) and Mrs Elizabeth Harland

(1992) and Mr Michael Thomson

(1964-65 and 1986) and Mrs

completely unique is that Kevin's

nephew Paul Goodall-Copestake,

received his Polar Medal for 1984

(and at the same investiture as his

cousin, Jonathan); and finally that

Jonathan's godfather was the Rev

Launcelot Fleming who received

his silver medal as a geologist

and chaplain during the British

Grahamland Expedition in the

lain and later rose to Bishop, both

of Norwich and Portsmouth.

In WW2 he was an RNVR chap-

Rear Admiral John Myres,

Dorchester-on-Thames,

Oxfordshire

However, where the Waltons are

Janet Thomson (1999)

Antarctic in 1935-37.

To add to the familial scene,

Carpenter's Mate respectively.



HNS Victory is not for sale

I HAVE been appalled at the way the present Government has run the Navy down over many years; they don't appear to consider past history. Now they are considering selling HMS Victory.

It not only would be a tragedy but a kick in the face to 200 years of gallant sailors.

They (the MOD) can't be serious; but yes this crass Government would consider such an act.

However what should be considered is the naval heritage and not only the sailors who served our country over the past 200 years but more recently during the Falklands War and in Afghanistan now; it would be more demoralising than the recent rundown of the Naval fleet.

I pray the whole country will be up in arms over this issue; but I won't hold my breath as many do not understand the issues or the sacrifices that Navy personnel have and are making in their defence. And some people appear anti-Forces when in fact they are anti the present conflicts.

It is an appalling prospect if the country's flagship

was lost to the Royal Navy.

- Michael Chivers, Southsea, Hants ...WHAT the hell is going on with HMS Victory? The ship is a status symbol to us ex-servicemen who have served and enjoyed the pleasure of serving with the Royal Navy.

Is there anything we as ex- and serving personnel can do to stop this stupidity? I and many more people have not much to look forward to in life.

There must be many more out there who need to know the truth about what is happening to these artefacts the country has still got left.

K J Collins, ex-Leading Seaman, Henley Green,

The media have run stories suggesting the Navy would be 'giving away' Nelson's flagship and that she would be decommissioned.

However the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Alan Massey, told Navy News: "We are extremely proud of HMS Victory, a truly iconic part of our maritime heritage.

"This unique warship is at the heart of the Royal Navy and there has never been any suggestion of giving her away or decommissioning the ship.

"This current media speculation concerns a study which seeks to guarantee the long-term future of HMS Victory as she undergoes essential maintenance work."

When the study is complete we will, of course, be reporting on it - Ed

of Exeter I WAS very interested in the Ex-

eter veterans' wreath-laying (September) as from 1938 until 1940 I was in 27 mess HMS Exeter.

Memories

When we arrived in Devonport for celebrations and leave I joined HMS Inglefield, then the old Centurion on secret operations. When we were in Bombay in 1942, Exeter came in so I went aboard to meet several old mates who had re-commissioned.

In 1945 I was a PO on HMS Implacable. After the two bombs were dropped, she was adapted to carry Aussies who had been PoWs back to Australia.

We then picked up 2,000 troops and 200 sailors and took them over to Vancouver to travel across Canada on the way home. Among the RN men were a few Exeters who had survived Nippon's cruelty, my old pal Taffy King among them.

At the 50th River Plate reunion I joined up with a few more - Taffy Robins who stayed on Makassar and Bill Johns who wrote the book No Surrender.

The 69th anniversary will be at the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport. There are very few of us left to attend, so it's now a family association. If anyone is interested, please contact the Secretary, B Smith, at Lyntondale Kirton Lane, Stainforth, Doncaster, tel. 01302 841806.

- J London, Claines, Worcester

...I WOULD like to point out that the man in the white hat in your picture of veterans in HMS Kent laying a wreath for their fallen shipmates of HMS Exeter is not George Gaskell, but my friend William 'Bill' Francis, who was a stoker on the cruiser HMS Exeter and was a PoW with the Japanese.

> - D R Jarman, Newport City, South Wales

Malay medal

IN REPLY to Brian 'Tommy' Tucker's letter (September) I also have been waiting for the award of the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal for nearly two years.

I served in Singapore and Malaya on two occasions -1954-56 aboard HMS Alert and 1960-63 at HMS Simbang Naval Air Station.

Like ex-PO Tucker I live in France and have done for nearly five years. Maybe this has some bearing on the matter, or maybe they are just waiting for us to cross the bar so that we become ineligible for a posthumous award. As I will be 77 next month, this is a distinct possibility.

Maybe another option would be to purchase a replica medal which seems to be widely available on eBay!

- Mike 'Doc' Andrews, Puys-Neuville, Les Dieppe, France

...I TOO applied to the National Malay and Borneo Veterans Association about two-and-a-half years ago. I have not received a reply thus far.

I also served from December 1964 until July 1965 in HMS Corunna, on anti-filtration patrols. The ship's company all received the GSM 1962 with Malay Peninsula Clasp.

So as Brian says, we are all in the same boat but on sister ships, if you will excuse the pun.

- Ted 'Fitz' Fitzsimmons,

ex-AB, FC2 GOW, Helston

Hood deserves better

AFTER 67 years, the recent academic exchanges of technical brickbats about HMS Hood appear futile and possibly upsetting to relatives of lost

On May 23 1941 I delivered a sealed canvas bag containing C and SP codebooks to the vessel at secret anchorage in Hvalfjordur and departed 30 minutes later.

As a young PO (21) I was taken to the ship by Norwegian gunboat RNN Nordkapp from base at Reykjavik, I watched Hood depart almost minutes later.

I had never seen such a large battle-cruiser before but was impressed by gleaming brasswork, spotless wood quarterdeck, immaculate

paintwork and belt of armour plating.

I was also overawed by the number of staff officers pacing the decking - awaiting sailing

On return to port, within hours the British force was in an uproar, following news of the brief battle with Bismarck.

The above comments are about one supreme and magnificent battle-cruiser at a time when all Naval services were stressed during the developing global conflict while endeavouring to maintain an Atlantic lifeline from the West.

- Lt Fred Fieldhouse (ret'd) aged 89, Stokesley, North Yorkshire

opinion

HMS Victory is indeed an iconic ship, as the Second Sea Lord, whose flagship she is, pointed out.

Polar pairings

Not only is there something in her to interest everyone, but she also engenders a feeling in many that is very close to worship.

For the connoisseur of great naval sea battles, her part in Trafalgar is endlessly fascinating. For those interested in naval architecture she is the world's finest surviving wooden warship, and for all those who love Nelson she is a shrine.

For schoolchildren and tourists who may have no previous knowledge when they visit Victory in her dry dock in Portsmouth, tales of how her sailors lived, ate and worked

grip all those with half an ounce of imagination and some feeling for history.

Perhaps more than anything, Victory reminds us of the sailors who served in her, and represents the fighting spirit which has secured our nation's independence for almost a thousand years, and which continues in our Navy today.

These intangible qualities are always difficult to justify in the face of hard-edged accounting.

But whatever the outcome of the current study into the way she is funded (and it is entirely reasonable that her funding should be reviewed) there must be no compromise either in her maintenance or in our commitment to her.



Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

October 2008 no.651: 55th year

Business

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Signpost to a Hunt

THE village of Puckeridge has just had four new road signs at its entrances, complete with ship's crest.

At the beginning of WW2 the East Herts district collected the money to launch a Huntclass destroyer, which was named after the Puckeridge Hunt.

This ship was destroyed by enemy action on the evening of September 6 1943, but is still remembered by the older generation as 'our ship'.

There are still survivors who would be pleased to see that their shipmates are still remembered here.

Eight survivors managed to come from

all over England to attend the 60th anniversary at our village church in Standon and the church was packed.

I have contacted one survivor and we hope you can notify any others through your letters

- D N Redding, Puckeridge, Ware, Herts We couldn't find a photograph of HMS Puckeridge, so instead here is a charming photo of the hunt after which she was named (kindly sent in by Denis O'Regan -www.easykey.net).

The new road signs with the crest were erected by Hertfordshire Highways, who sent us the image of the roadsign - Ed

UCKERIDG

Please drive carefully

Whose Navy is it?

WITH reference to the article about the new carriers (August) Baroness Taylor is quoted as saying: "These ships are fundamental for a Navy fit for the 21st Century."

I don't mean to be facetious, but which Navy? The First Sea Lord is quoted as saying: "We are a major European power, play a key part of the European Union and are a major leader in this field."

He is then quoted as describing the flight deck of each ship as "four acres of sovereign territory," but he doesn't say whose.

There is no mention of NATO, which is surely the cornerstone of our defence.

Are we to understand the EU is now our new defence arrangement, and if so please could either Baroness Taylor or Sir Jonathon Band explain when Parliament placed our conventional and nuclear forces at the disposal of the EU?

I believe that Parliament has at no stage approved the transfer of our defence to the EU and indeed the government gave assurances during the recent debate on the Treaty of Lisbon that defence continued as a UK preserve, as part of its argument that the Treaty was altogether different from the EU constitution.

The UK's sovereign status has lapsed since the European Communities Act 1972, according to Mr Justice Laws in rejecting the appeal of the so-called Metric Martyrs.

The Treaties of Rome and Maastricht also provide for a single foreign policy and defence policy.

Please can we have an honest statement of where the RN is heading?

I very much fear that within a few years it will have ceased to exist in favour of an EU Navy.

- Stephen Dixon, Gillingham,

editor should the to always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for

us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy

> We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



A Naval Charity for ALL service and ex-service personnel of

the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, QARNNS, and their Reserves

Ocean trawls for members

FORMER Fleet MAA Mick Cahill is the first new ship member to join the HMS Ocean Association - and it is hoped he represents a reversal in the trend of falling numbers.

The Association was formed in 1987, eight years before the current HMS Ocean was launched.

It flourished for many years, but numbers are now declining among the old and bold.

In the hope of attracting more young members, the association is offering associate membership to everyone serving in the current HMS Ocean, and to pilots who served on board the current or previous ship - but so far these measures haven't been enough to swell the numbers.

"We do recognise that the present ship's company is only a quarter that of the previous ship," said Rear Admiral Euan Maclean, the association's president.

"Also, time on board and in the Service tends to be shorter and people tend to join ship associations when they leave the Service."

He added: "We're still keen to recruit members from the previous ship. And if the association has to die out, we'll go down with all guns firing."

Mick Cahill, who left the Navy as Fleet Command Warrant Officer (Surface Ships) after a 35-year career, said: "For those on board Ocean now there will always be a welcome for you here and please never forget the ship you came from and the affection those before you still have for her."

Anyone wishing to join the HMS Ocean Association should contact chairman Bill Entwistle at 8 Irene St, Burnley BB10 4DJ, tel 01282 433910 or email newsletter editor Eric Dempster at dempstermuffin@aol.com

Stamps in the bag

officers from Portsmouth branch have handed over bags of used postage stamps to the city's lifeguards.

Branch secretary S/M Rev David Stephen Butler (a city councillor, in whose St Jude ward the lifeguards operate) and chairman S/M Peter Longstaff took the stamps along to the Portsmouth and Southsea Voluntary Lifeguards' station.

The stamps will help the lifeguards achieve their target of a new HQ.

Visit of the lamp men

MEMBERS of the Batti Wallahs Society visited HMS Collingwood to see how training is carried out at the Maritime Warfare School.

The society was founded in 1906 by P&O Line electrical engineers, who provided navigational lighting for shipping passing through confined waters such as the Suez Canal.

Membership was later extended to electrical engineers in the RN and merchant shipping lines.

'Batti wallah' is derived from the Hindustani for 'lamp men'.

HQ bids farewell to Chelsea

AFTER many years of residency in leafy and upmarket Chelsea, the RNA is in the throes of moving its HQ to Portsmouth.

As of the first of this month HQ will be within the confines of the naval base, following the decision of the 2007 annual conference.

The HQ was established in Chelsea in the early 1950s because, at the that time, there was a considerable Naval presence in London, and the communications technology of the day almost necessitated a presence in the capital.

Since then things have changed dramatically; the RN presence in London is markedly reduced with the staff of 2SL and CINCFleet relocated to Portsmouth.

Additionally, advances in communications now make a London presence unnecessary.

The aim of the move is to take the Association

"WELL - back on board after

47 years," writes Leigh Easton

of the HMS Bulwark, Albion,

Centaur Association, on board

HMS Bulwark from Gibraltar

the quarterdeck without a beret?

Ah... that's the reason all the

retired Naval officers wear funny

the gangway? Good grief, it's the

"Who is this at the other end of

"It's fair to say I was not greeted

on board by Capt Franks in 1961.

Very nice though, and all very

friendly - if only I could think of

- the flight deck has disappeared

and the stern rises; still room for

Auty (Weapons Engineering), and

the welcome to the Chiefs' Mess

prompted him to reflect that he

He was joined the following day

by S/Ms Bob Cowan (ex C/Sgt

RM, Bulwark 5 and 6 commissions)

and Ian Chesney (ex-Stoker,

Bulwark 10 commission), and the

"Something a bit odd though

S/M Leigh's contact was CPO

something appropriate to say!

two choppers though."

should never have left.

"Not yet. How does one salute

to Plymouth.

hats whilst in civvies.

Captain, Jeremy Blunden.

to where the RN is - following the recent signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the RN, easier access (collocation almost) to the Naval authorities is seen as highly desirable.

Additionally, the Chelsea site was pretty remote, and visitors to HQ were few and far between - the General Secretary reckons that the last sailor to visit HQ was Noel Coward...

Maybe not quite, but staff did not have to buy too many visitors' books.

For the time being, access to HQ will be restricted as it is within the naval base security perimeter, but it is hoped there will be better visiting arrangements in due course.

The recently-recruited Deputy General Secretary of the RNA, S/M Frank Ward, is now busy preparing the new offices for

Back to Bulwark

Rock before the ship sailed.

an R02 – will be impressed."

associated gear.

according to S/M Leigh.

ashore in an LCU "driven in a

very seamanlike manner by C/Sgt

Mell Mellor of 4 Assault Squadron

a quiz.

RM."

accommodation, procuring new IT equipment, furniture etc.

New staff are being recruited since the long-standing and loyal team from Chelsea, Tony Sattin and Noeline Lee, are going off to well-deserved retirement, though they will be sorely missed.

Much still remains to be done, so be patient - it should be worth the wait once everything is in place and running smoothly!

The new HQ address is Room 209, Semaphore Tower, Building 1/040, PP70, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

The number to call for general enquiries is 023 9272 3823, for the Deputy General Secretary the number is 023 9272 0782, and for the General Secretary dial 023 9272

Winchester celebrates silver date

MEMBERS of Winchester branch, including president David Oddie and his wife Gill, gathered at St Barnabas Church, Weeke, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the recommissioning of the branch.

Guests of honour included the Deputy Mayor of the city, Cllr Dominic Hiscock, and Admiral Sir Derek Reffell, president of Area 3.

Also in attendance were shipmates from Southampton and Alresford, plus two Sea Cadets officers.

The service was taken by Revd Terry Roberts, vicar of St Barnabas and Winchester branch padre, while S/M Martin Wiltshire carried the standard.

All then moved to the church hall for speeches and refreshment branch chairman John Wyeth also toasted the Association and absent friends.

Kenyan reunion

THE Church House Inn at Rattery was the venue for the 35th reunion of the Kenya Navy Veterans of Mtongwe Naval Base Mombasa.

The team, which trained the fledgling Kenyan Navy in the 1960s, may be losing a few of its older members, but has also gained several younger ones along the way.

A big vote of thanks was due to Dave Hutson, who has organised the events for many years but is standing down next year because of his health.

Ships tour

MEMBERS of Falmouth branch enjoyed a waterborne tour of the competitors in the Funchal 500 Tall Ships Race on the evening before they departed.

The excursion included a trip up the River Fal and a grandstand view of the evening's fireworks display.

The trip was organised by branch social secretary S/M Stan Kirkbride and treasurer S/M Alan Polley.



The well deck of HMS Bulwark

Club funds new lifeboat

AN RNLI lifeboat, funded by a donation from the North Russia Club, is to be named during a ceremony at the Sea Survival Centre at the Lifeboat College in Poole this month.

The club originally covered ex-Servicemen who served at RN bases in Archangel and Murmansk during World War 2, and was later extended to all who served in Arctic convoys.

But with the formal winding-up of the club, due to declining numbers, the balance of club funds was donated to the RNLI to pay for the new boat, Northern Light, named after the club's former quarterly magazine.

Service gives thanks for life of VC submariner

ELEVEN standard bearers were honoured to parade at the service of thanksgiving for submariner Lt Cdr Ian Fraser VC.

The national standard of the Submariners Association was paraded, together with five branch standards - those of Merseyside, Manchester, Wales, London and Derby.

The Royal British Legion, the RNA, HMS Conway and other standards were also on display.

St James's Church in New Brighton was packed for the service, with standing room only.

Rear Admiral Submarines attended, together with four members of the crew of HMS Astute and senior officials of

SOON THE RED FLAG OF

PORTS TO SHOW THEY

ex-Service organisations including the RNA and the Merchant Navy Association.

The service was dedicated to the life of Ian Fraser, but also marked the end of a significant era.

The man who drove the midget submarine XE3 through tight security into the Strait of Singapore to sink the Japanese cruiser Takao in the summer of 1945 – an operation which also saw diver Jim Magennis win the VC - was the last remaining holder in the Silent Service.

Indeed, it also marked the passing of the last holder of the 119 VCs awarded to the Royal Navy, including those in the Royal Marines, RNR and RNVR.



The US Navy colour party parades at Falmouth

Sea Sunday splendour

GLORIOUS weather once again greeted the marchers in the annual Falmouth Sea Sunday parade and church service, organised by Falmouth branch.

HMS Cornwall was off Falmouth for the event, before sailing for an intensive period of training, and 60 of her ship's

company took part in the parade. Also on the streets of the town were 15 midshipmen under training at Dartmouth and a

colour party from the US Navy at St Mawgan.

A number of other branches from Cornwall and beyond were involved, as were youth organisations such as the Sea Cadets and Sea Scouts.

Following the service at the church of King Charles the Martyr, the parade reformed and marched on to a buffet and reception which was held at the National Maritime Museum.



90 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH, THE GERMAN HIGH SEAS FLEET PREPARED FOR A FINAL BATTLE WITH OUR GRAND FLEET ..



BUT, WITH THE END OF THE WAR IN SIGHT, WIDE- REVOLUTION WAS FLYING SPREAD MUTINIES BROKE FROM ALL THEIR NAVAL OUT AND THE MISSION WAS CALLED OFF.





Outreach support scheme launched

A NEW veterans outreach support programme has been launched in Portsmouth.

Dr Morgan O'Connell, recently Chief Consultant Psychiatrist to Combat Stress, and 'Joe' Erskine, of SSAFA - Forces Help (Portsmouth), together with David Watts, General Manager of the Royal Maritime Club, set up the initiative to benefit ex-Service veterans and/or family members.

The venue is the former Home Club, in Queen Street, between 3pm and 8pm on the first

Wednesday of every month. Accommodation is available see www.royalmaritimeclub. co.uk/ and quote "Outreach at agreed Members Rates" when booking.

The programme will operate as a drop-in centre where those interested can come for a private chat, hopefully with a GP, psychiatrist and/or therapist.

There will also be an advice centre providing access to groups such as the RNBT, the RBL, Combat Stress and the SPVA.

You may make an appointment for a specific time by calling Dr O'Connell on 01329 834512 leave details on the answering machine if necessary and you will be contacted within 48 hours.

The programme will be subject to change as it evolves.

Fish supper hits the spot

ANOTHER successful Cheshunt branch messdeck fish and chip supper was held at the Conservative Club in Waltham Cross, the usual venue for branch meetings.

Congratulations are extended to two shipmates and their wives who celebrated their Diamond Weddings - S/M Don Clark and his wife Joan, and S/M Tom Millard and Vera.

The branch was pleased to welcome another serving member of the RN on board over the summer - Logistician Matthew Drummy, whose mother Antonia also joined up.

Membership doubles with new agreement

THE Association's muchheralded Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Royal Navy has been formally signed and agreed, giving membership of the RNA to every serving sailor.

Action will be taken over the coming months to implement the agreement, but RNA officials point out this is a living document which may need to be amended or changed to meet operational needs of the Navy and administrative requirements of the Association.

The most immediate impact of the agreement is that the RNA has more than doubled in size and can now claim to be the largest, and arguably most influential, official maritime membership association in Britain, if not Europe.

The MOU acknowledges that "the age profile of the membership is high and activities of the membership and thus branches are frequently restricted by age and infirmity."

It also recognises that the joining age for most full-time members is around 55, because of the time taken for ex-sailors to 'bed in' to a second career in their 30s or 40s.

Despite "considerable effort" in recent years, the number of serving members has remained small, the MOU reports, largely

due to the peripatetic nature of Service life and the difficulty that causes when a member is a member of a particular branch.

"However it is compellingly obvious that the key to the future health and vibrancy of the Association lies in reduction of the age profile by recruiting and retaining younger members," the MOU continues.

As part of the agreement, the RNA has made a number of undertakings, including:

Formation of a new form of membership for the RN entitled the Serving Member;

Serving members will be able to enter any RNA branch or club, without invitation, on production of the appropriate Service Identity Card, which will serve as an RNA Serving Member card;

Serving members will not be members of any particular branch unless they join in their own right, and will therefore have no voting powers of their own;

Serving members will, however, have a representative on the RNA National Council;

Serving Members will pay no subscription;

☼ Each ship, unit and establishment will receive an electronic copy of the RNA monthly circular;

Each Area Secretary will provide HQ with a social programme in which the serving members might participate, which will be distributed to appropriate ships, units and establishments.

In return, the RN undertakes: To nominate a suitable member of the Naval Service, usually 2SL's Command Warrant Officer, for appointment as Vice President (Serving Members);

To ensure ships and units appoint a point of contact to liaise with branch committees and HQ; Provide, on an occasional basis, space on the NFF and RNCom websites, and others as appropriate, to advertise linkage between the RN and the RNA.

A new system will ensure the

RNA and RN work more closely in the regions to allow the Association to play a greater part in ship visits; overseas branches will be made aware of foreign visits.

"The Royal Navy and the RNA recognise and value the co-operation and amity which has traditionally existed between them, and the RN undertakes to encourage its personnel to remain members of the RNA on retirement," the MOU concludes.

The document will be reviewed annually at a senior level, with an initial six-month progress check.



 The Briggs Rose Bowl is handed over – but only temporarily. The trophy for the small branch recruiting most full members was this year shared by Bracknell and Stafford, who will hold it for six months each. Here S/M Bob Privett (left), chairman of Bracknell branch, receives the trophy from Area 6 president S/M Les Gascoyne at an area meeting

Tribute plaque to Kite

A PLAQUE bearing the names of 217 men who died when HMS Kite was torpedoed on a Russian convoy in 1944 has been unveiled in Essex.

And one of those who attended was Gordon Copson, one of the few surviving men who witnessed the sinking.

A memorial had been dedicated to the ship in 2004, attended by two of the nine survivors of HMS Kite and two from HMS Keppel, the accompanying ship - including S/M Copson.

Four years on the only living survivor of Kite, Lionel Irish, was not well enough to attend.

"It was a strange feeling to realise that I was the only person there who had witnessed the sinking," said S/M Copson.

Gordon was a Telegraphist (S) on board Keppel, "stuck in a little office right aft in the officers' flats under X gun - rather noisy at times with the depth-charge throwers outside," he said.

The convoy veteran has been wondering whether there are any of his shipmates from the time still about - if so, he would like to hear from them via email on gordon. copson@ntlworld.com

Tribute to VC

MEMBERS of Maidstone and Chatham branches attended a service of commemoration in honour of the first recipient of the Victoria Cross, Admiral Charles Davis Lucas, buried at St Lawrence Church in Mereworth, Kent.

The service was also attended by Maidstone Sea Cadets and local scout groups, who added their standards to those of the RNA.



Rum bosun S/M Bob Shaw is busy with the measures

£50 PRIZE PUZZILE



THE mystery ship in our August edition (right) was HMS Cachalot, and she was correctly identified by Mr R Denny of Plymouth, who wins £50.

This month's submarine (above) is pictured in 1970, shortly before a mishap at Gosport which proved to be an ignominious end to a career spanning a quarter of a century.

What is the name of the unlucky submarine, which took the name of a Greek goddess?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a



Closing date for entries is November 14. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our December edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 164

Passing of the tot mourned

COMMISERATIONS exchanged once again as members of Plymouth branch gathered to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the abolition of the tot.

With all veterans present qualifying under the 'over age 20' rule, rum bosun S/M Bob Shaw was kept busy ensuring that tots were correctly measured and speedily distributed.

Branch secretary S/M Arthur Gutteridge gave a brief history of the tot issue and its demise before proposing the Loyal Toast.

And S/M Arthur's wife Sue, and the social committee, were thanked for organising the event, which raised just under £100 for

The same sentiments were in evidence at the City of Ely branch, where shipmates have been indulging their sorrow for the past nine years. Their acts of commiseration

began at RAF Mildenhall where their American friends were totally taken up by the idea, especially the black ribbons sported on lapels. This year was no different,

thanks to ex-Wren PO(CK) Eithne and her family, who transformed their garden into a suitable venue and thereby helped to raise some £250 for good causes.



The Royal Naval Association

Once Navy Always Navy

Unity, Loyalty, Patriotism and Comradeship

Who can join?

- **Full Members** Serving and Ex-Service members of RN, RM, QARNNS, WRNS, Reserves **RFA and RNXS**
- Associate members Others in sympathy with our objects especially families

What does the **Association do?**

- Support the Royal Navy
- **Maintain Naval traditions**
- **Enjoy social activities**
- Re-unite shipmates Remember the fallen
- Help the disabled Look after the needy
- Cheer up the distressed Stand together in unity

How to join

Write to RNA HQ Room 209, Semaphore Tower, Building 1/040, PP70, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT

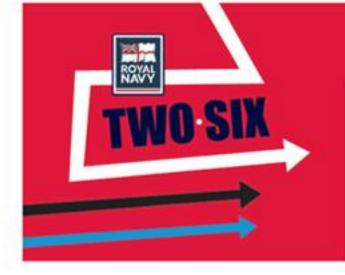
For General Enquiries Tel: 023 9272 3823 **Deputy General Secretary** Tel: 023 9272 0782







News and information for serving personnel



Seminar keeps WOs in picture

THE first Joint Services Warrant Officers' Course (JSWOC) seminar has been staged at the Joint Services Command and Staff College at Shrivenham.

The seminar was designed to provide an update on issues covered during the course, and 99 graduates attended, including a number of multinational and multi-agency students.

Although a wide range of subjects were covered, they all had an operational bias.

The seminar also allowed graduates to network with each other and guest speakers.

The keynote speech was given by Defence Secretary Des Browne, who delivered a strategic overview and then took part in a lively question-and-answer session under the Chatham House Rule, under which information may be freely used but the anonymity of participants is strictly maintained.

Current operations and particular issues were analysed from the perspective of each Service, while senior officers from Canada, Kenya and France updated the audience on operations and changes to defence policy in their respective countries.

Prizes were also handed out to outstanding students on the various courses from the 2007 programme.

The day ended with a formal dinner, at which principal guest Mr Browne was joined by a number of senior officers, including Rear Admiral Neil Morisetti, the Commandant Joint Services Command and Staff College.

For those who have yet to attend the JSWOC, you can find details at www.da.mod.uk/courses/ courses-by-rank/warrantofficers-courses/ or call 01793 788854.

Day of Prayer for Forces

THE Armed Forces' Chaplaincies and the Military Christian organisations are staging a Day of Prayer for the Armed Forces on Thursday November 6 at St Clement Danes, Strand, London.

In past times of conflict, the nation was called upon to pray for sailors, soldiers and airmen, and with the Forces once again heavily involved in various operations the chaplaincies have set up a focal point for such a day.

The afternoon will consist of prayer, worship and topical briefings between 12.45pm and 4pm, with a light lunch served from midday.

For more information and a make it to London see www. pray4ourforces.org.uk or email forcesprayerday@yahoo.co.uk

It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

To feature in 2-6 contact Lt Cdr Gregor Birse (Fleet Media Ops), 93832 8809.



Make the most of resources

I WONDERED long and hard about what I should dedicate my six-monthly slot in Navy News to this time, writes Kim Richardson Chair Naval Families Federation.

What sort of topics are high on the NFF agenda at present? Housing, Service Command Paper, securing school places and that old chestnut, timely efficient appropriate

communication! At about the same time as I was wondering about what you might find interesting, my mum gave me an old book with some notes written by my great-grandmother, Ethel Pook.

The book contained handwritten notes about her experiences as a Naval wife nearly 100 years ago. Here is what she writes:

"To understand why this day stands out in my memory I must start my story a little earlier. "In 1911 I was married to a

young Naval shipwright who was stationed in Portsmouth. "We started married life in a

little house at Southsea and for just over a year we were very happy.

"By this time we had just had a little son. When he was a few weeks old my husband was sent to a ship which sailed away to the Mediterranean and he was away for two years.

"When he eventually came home we knew that he would be due for a home billet and we felt safe in looking forward to being together again.

"Imagine our delight when he was drafted to Osborne House in the Isle of Wight.

"At that time there was a Royal Naval Cadet College in the grounds of Osborne House which was one of Queen Victoria's favourite residences. My husband's duties were to do with the College.

"We decided that to be together we would store our home and would go over and live at the Island.

"My husband obtained rooms for us and we went over in the beginning of August, 1914.

"The first thing we received was an invitation to a cricket match at Osborne.

"Being August, the cadets would be on holiday. The match was arranged between the officers and ratings, and the officers were supplying a tea for wives and families.

"We arrived and sat around on



the lovely lawns and the men, all in white cricket gear, were enjoying their game. It was a typical English summer afternoon scene.

"I don't remember how long we sat but it was not very long when we were startled by a big fire bell ringing.

"Of course we did not realise what it meant, but within a few minutes the men had all vanished into their quarters.

"After a very short time, they all came out dressed in their Navy uniform and carrying hand luggage which they must have hurriedly packed.

"They had not time to talk to us, but all made their way to one side of the ground and we just followed.

"We found that there was a narrow railway there with trucks on it. The men all loaded their luggage on these trucks and started pushing them.

"We found that this led down to River Medina which runs between East and West Cowes.

"There we found a launch waiting and the men all crowded on to this. They had no time to talk to us and all we could follow was that it would all be over by Christmas and they would soon be back again.

"It was a very hasty goodbye and they all waved to us and sailed away over to Portsmouth.

"We wives and families were left not knowing what to do, but we gradually made our way back to our temporary homes. I did not see my husband again for a whole year. I have often wondered what happened to the tea..."

Many of you will be able to



identify with Ethel.

Long periods at sea, sometimes little or no notice before your loved one goes, your loved ones going off to war and a sense of uncertainty about their return.

But we have moved forward.

Ethel didn't have any of the communication channels we have today; she relied solely on infrequent letters and the support of friends and family.

Email, Paradigm, RNCom and mobile phones have all made keeping in touch easier.

Our welfare provision in the form of NPFS and Royal Marines Welfare are attuned to the needs of our families.

When you combine this technology and support with the voice of families being louder and more listened to than ever before, it makes me wonder what she would think of Naval family life today.

But, and it is a big but, are families aware of what is available to them, do they know where to

go in an emergency or during a family crisis when the Serving person is not contactable? I am not convinced they do.

We have a wealth of resources available to families which they may not need now, but in the future might just make a difference.

My message to you today is pick up a copy of Navy News or our in-house magazine Homeport, log on to our website and check out RNcom

Take a look at the Service Personnel Command Paper.

Tell us about the good things, also tell us about the things you find more difficult about Naval life and, more importantly, tell us what more we could be doing about it.

If my great granddaughter picks up this article in 100 years time I wonder what she will think.

I will never know - but what I do know is that today we can make a difference.

In a constructive diplomatic way, and together – let's do just that!

Young reservists discuss support

HOW do you persuade your civilian boss to support you when you want to take nine months off for a deployment to Afghanistan or Iraq, writes S/Lt Laura Harrison RNR of HMS Wildfire.

This was one of the questions put to more than 40 young reserve officers from nearly 30 countries at the 2008 Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) Summer Congress, which took place in Istanbul.

Amongst the 40 were 2/Lt Andrew Pugsley (RMR London), S/Lt Gemma Fox (HMS King Alfred), Lt Paul Ladislaus (HMS Calliope), Lt Sally Armstrong (HMS Vivid) and Lt Kathleen Standen (HMS Wildfire).

The five were participating in the Young Reserve Officers' Workshop (YROW), a key component of the Congress.

Lt Hannah MacKenzie (HMS Wildfire), a participant in YROW 2008, also attended as a syndicate facilitator for one of the groups.

Enabling NATO operations through effective employer support, the theme of this year's symposium, was the topic of discussion for young reserve officers as they brainstormed how they could make their military and civilian careers complement one another.

The participants came to Turkey to share their experiences - not all countries have organisations such as the UK's SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) to fight the reservist's corner.

The workshop also contributes to understanding between the officers of different nations, who are increasingly working together in multinational forces.

There was also a chance to improve communication skills as findings were gathered, discussed and collated for presentation to

Any reserve officers under the age of 30 and below the rank of Lt (RNR) or Captain (RMR) who would like to attend YROW 2009 in Sofia, Bulgaria, should contact the UK Reserve Forces Association for further information.

www.ukrfa.org/ for

Last QinetiQ shares are sold

THE Ministry of Defence has announced the sale of its remaining ordinary shares in QinetiQ Group plc at a price of 206p per share.

Minister for Defence Equipment and Support Baroness Taylor said: "I am pleased to announce that with this sale of shares in QinetiQ we have completed the final stage of its privatisation."

Naval trophies made available

The firm employs around 13,00 people at locations around the UK, and remains a key supplier to the Armed Forces.

Although the Government no longer has a financial stake in QinetiQ, it will retain a special share in the company to protect the UK's defence and security interests.

TROPHY P12156 is a 23in diameter prayer sheet for those unable to silver punchbowl, originally presented to the armoured cruiser HMS Bedford by the County of Bedfordshire in March 1905 in order to be competed for annually by the

> gun crews. The bowl bears a depiction of a gun crew and details of the winners; the base has panels bearing battle honours won by previous HMS

Bedfords. One honour Camperdown (October 11 1797), won by the 74-gun HMS Bedford when of Duncan's North Sea Squadron.

THE Trustees of the RN Trophy Fund plan to dispose of a number of trophies - cigarette boxes, cigarette lighters, ashtrays and wine decanter coasters – for which future usage is unlikely.

The majority are either of blue or silver plate, and original donors are being given the opportunity to reclaim their gifts.

Before selling the remainder



at public auction, the Trustees wish serving and former Royal Navy personnel to have the opportunity to purchase these items and, while photos cannot be provided, further details of these items in question can be obtained from the Secretary to the RN Trophy Fund Trustees at the RN Trophy Centre, Hardy Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH, or by email at either CXP RNTC SEC on the Intranet or at cxprntcsec@a.dii.mod.uk

TROPHY P12878 is an oil painting

by Russell Flint of five Tribal-class

Channel in June 1944, presented

to HMS Tartar in 1963 by the Tribal

HMS Tartar, the others being

Eskimo, Ashanti and the Canadian

The Navy provided 126 ships,

The ship in the foreground is

Class Memorial Committee.

Haida and Huron.

It is the Trustees' intention that items be used and appreciated by those to whom their provenance and history might be significant and that they will not be 'recycled' on eBay... To encourage bids from serving

and former Service personnel, no reserve price has been set and in the event of there being two equal bids for an item, preference will be given in the following order:

To any person who was in the ship or establishment at the

including Tartar, for the Allied landings at Salerno, which took destroyers under air attack in the place on September 9 1943. There was no bombardment, yet the beaches were captured,

> despite fierce resistance. British and US forces landed at two locations, and after day one were still ten miles apart, but 24 hours later they had linked up and controlled 40 miles of coast.

time the item was originally presented;

To the person who served for the longer period in the ship or establishment;

To other persons.

Bids for a particular item should be made to the Secretary to the Trustees at the address shown above by Friday October 31 2008. Successful bidders will be informed shortly thereafter.

Envelopes containing written bids are to be marked 'SBA 1' in

the top left corner, and this is to be the subject of email bids.

All must include the following details:

Name of bidder; Details of item being bid for;

Dates of service in the particular ship or establishment;

Amount of bid; Full contact address.

News and information for serving personnel

News and information for serving personnel

WO1 Andy Rainey

Three wishes for the future

ALMOST a year into his tenure, the Second Sea Lord's Command Warrant Officer (CWO) has a clear view of where he wants to see improvements by the time he hands over his cane.

The man who sits at the top of the ratings' tree, and provides a crucial link between the lower deck and his boss, said: "I am there to listen, and to make sure that the voices of the ratings are heard.

"But I am also there to make sure that the ratings don't shrug off as management speak the news that they need to hear."

With the CWO and Executive Warrant Officer system in place to channel information back and forth through the Navy, WO1 Andy Rainey says there is now a much better system for understanding how the people feel about issues and the people of the Royal Navy are its greatest asset.

But WO1 Rainey said there were three particular areas where he would still like to see improvements.

"The first is the relationship between officers and ratings, helping the Officer Corps has a greater understanding of the ratings," he said.

"By virtue of my position, it is much easier for me to go speak to a whole raft of officers.

"It's as important to me to be able to ensure that there is a flow of easily-understood language up and down the command chain."

The second area is of openness within and outside the RN, and a chance for junior ratings to aspire to high positions within the ratings cadre - including the role of Command Warrant Officer.

"The final thing is very much more basic," said WO1 Rainey.

"I would like to see far more of a structured career progression to the Senior Rate cadre.

"I say that because, if you are good enough, you could be promoted to WO1 at age 32, which essentially means that you have got an 18-year career as a WO1 ahead of you, and that is all there is.

"My goal would be to help create something better.

"I am keen that WO1s, once they reach the top of their profession, aren't left hanging on, doing the same job until boredom drives them from the Service.

"There are over 800 WO1s in the Naval Service. They should be able to work across a range of jobs.

"Essentially, WO1s promoted for their leadership, management and administrative skills, and an awful lot get tied back into branch."

WO1 Rainey said his role was not to act as an individual's hotline to 2SL, and as such he believes the Divisional system is one of the Navy's successes - one which can

deal with most circumstances. "The divisional system has looked after me for 30 years, and I actually think one of the best initiatives in recent years is the reinvigoration of the divisional system," he said.

Bavarian success is no great surprise

THE NEW Naval Outdoor Centre, nestling in the Allgau region of Bavaria, is already taking bookings for 2009.

The centre, in Southern Germany, offers activities for all levels, good weather, fantastic scenery and is within a day's drive from all UK base port areas.

In its initial guise as Exercise Bavarian Surprise (Ex BS) the scheme grew from an eight-week adventurous training (AT) and challenging activities (CA) affair in 2005, and within two years it had grown to a 30-week package from April to October attracting 1,385 participants.

Ex BS gave RN and RM personnel the opportunity to fulfil 2SL's PFS of five-day AT/CA, providing valuable skills which are transferable to other areas and thereby enhancing operational capability.

Ex BS's enormous popularity, and the fact that AT has been recognised as helping with retention, led to the opening of the Naval Outdoor Centre (Germany).

In 2009, skiing will take place from January 15 until May, with a variety of five-day courses, including basic ski proficiency (from complete novice to blue runs, or improved novices as far as red runs) and advance proficiency for intermediate skiers.

There will also be the chance to sample the delights of ski touring.

The tried and tested multiactivity package will run from May to October, offering a round-robin of activities including kayaking or open boating, climbing, Alpine mountain walking or Klettersteiging and mountain biking, with an opportunity to do white-water rafting or canyoning on the final day.

Packages will last a week, running from Sunday to Sunday, and begin at the ferry terminal in Dover.

A luxury German coach will whisk passengers overnight to Bavaria to the Haus Schwaben an English-run hotel with great food - where participants will be allocated a room, receive a



Instructors take over on Tuesday with a programme tailored for each individual's needs.

Possibilities for the evening include swimming at a local pool, BBQs and quizzes and waterskiing on the lake in summer.

Bespoke packages can be arranged for groups of around eight to 12 concentrating on one of the activities provided, for which there may be a charge.

The centre will support the Navy's Battle Back initiative for wounded personnel with specialist weeks in March and July.

And RN and RM families will benefit from dedicated time over Easter, allowing them to stay at the centre at heavily-discounted rates – provided they are members of the Sports Lottery.

If the initiative is successful, further family time will be allocated in the first three weeks of August and at Christmas.

The centre will also provide a great opportunity for any PTI who would like to pursue a career as an AT instructor.

Whether just setting out and wanting to gain further qualifications and experience, or developing qualifications to enable you to work at a level 4 centre in the future, this place is ideal.

The offer to work as an instructor goes to anyone holding relevant qualifications who would like the opportunity to get involved with teaching; providing you can be spared from your place of work it is possible to come out and assist for a period of time.

To take up your five days of AT/CA entitlement, your first point of contact should be the PT Office or ship's PTI, who can provide more information and an application form.

Or you could go online at www. englishguesthouse.com and follow links to Bavaria Surprise; Or call 07900 443128 or 0049 8324 2290;

Or email FLEET-N1 NLM PERS PAT SO3 (mil) or paul. gellender267@mod.uk

An early taste for adventure

STRONG links between the Royal Navy and the Royal Geographical Society which stretch back to the academic body's foundation in 1830 are still nurtured in the 21st century.

In 1827 the Thatched House tavern in the St James area of London became a meeting place for a number of figures who, as was common at the time, met for dinner to debate the scientific and academic issues of the day.

Among them were Rear Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort - generally accepted as the founder of modern hydrography - and Arctic explorer Rear Admiral Sir John Franklin.

In the same year that this informal 'club' became the RGS a child was born in Yorkshire who would become a passionate supporter of both the RN and

Clements Robert Markham entered the Navy at 14 and spent four years on an 83,000-mile voyage to the Pacific. He later sailed in the Arctic Squadron.

On leaving the Navy he joined the East India Company, but maintained his affinity for the Senior Service.

At the age of 63 Markham was elected President of the RGS, dominating its affairs for an unprecedented 12 years, and it was his drive which saw funding for Scott's expedition to the Antarctic in the first years of the 20th Century.

The same spirit of endeavour and self-fulfilment is engendered through the Royal Navy's Adventurous Training programme, of which Bavarian Surprise is a prime example (see left).

For those in the Navy who take adventure and geography seriously – and there are a number of Fellows of the RGS who have gone to work in a dark blue suit the Society runs its annual Explore expedition and fieldwork planning weekend from November 21-23 in London.

For more details about Explore 2008 see www.rgs.org/Explore See next month's Navy News for an article by PO Stephen Paris-Hunter FRGS

Royals launch campaign with 007

A NEW 50-second Royal Marines recruiting film, Swamp Ambush, will be launched on November 7 with the new Bond film Quantum of Solace.

Over the weekends of November 8 and 22, RM personnel will be present in some 20 key cinema fovers around the UK with supporting displays and trialing a new facility that allows visitors with Bluetooth phones to receive other new RM video material.

Following its launch alongside the new Bond, the RM film will run to the end of March 2009 alongside other new films that will attract the target recruit audience of 16-24 year old men - Australia, Changeling, Seven Pounds, Defiance, and Watchmen.

The film will be shown throughout UK but budget constraints do not allow coverage of the London area.

A 30-second version of the film will also run on PubTV from November to March.

A series of 'RM Challenge' ads is also planned to appear on Setanta, Dave and Virgin TV during the breaks in selected programmes watched by the target audience.

A further series of digital ads will also be appearing on selected websites throughout the period.



A shot from the new RM recruiting film Swamp Ambush

The popular range of posters will appear in over 300 leisure and fitness centres in January and February 2009.

The award-winning RM website www.royalmarines.mod.uk will carry further new material on RM 'States of Mind'.

The previous RM recruiting campaign was launched in October 2007 and ran to March this year.

The cinema film, Worst Nightmare, was seen by more than 24 million people; the PubTV film by more than 3 million; whilst online advertising was seen by over 25 million.

Over the course of this first phase of the campaign, the RM website received over half a million

unique visitors to the homepage. To measure the effectiveness

of the campaign a representative sample of 16-24 year old UK men was interviewed before and after the first phase. This was supplemented by an online survey.

This revealed that awareness of RM rose by six per cent to 57 per cent of our target audience, with an encouraging six per cent increase in interest in a career with the Royal Marines.

This new second phase of the campaign plans to build on this successful start.



NOTICEBOARD

Ask Jack

HMS Antrim, Far East Tour 1980: Has any sailor got any photos of William David Travis who was on this tour? David sadly died some 15 years ago and his mother anxiously needs some replacement photos. Please contact Mrs Doreen Greenway (was Travis) at keithilp@talktalk.net or tel: 01142 664424.

HMS Arethusa: Daphne Oliver is looking for anyone who served on board the Arethusa with her father 'Tiz Wye'. He was a torpedo man and was on the ship when she was torpedoed in the Mediterranean. Contact Daphne at daphne.Oliver@blueyonder. com or tel: 07747 443890.

Sub Lt Frederick Moncrieff Batten: I am researching my family history and am trying to find out about Sub Lt Batten, born February 27 1922. He enlisted with the New Zealand Territorial Force in June 1940; trained with the Royal New Zealand Navy on the Philomel, Auckland in January 1942 for secondment to the RN/FAA. He arrived in March 1942, and was attached to St Vincent at Gosport. He served on Vulture at St Merryn in July 1942 and Daedalus at Lee-on-Solent from August 1942. On December 5, 1944 while with the Fleet Air Arm in Scotland his Firefly Z1903 stalled on approach and was burnt out. Frederick was buried on the 7th at Arbroath. Any information about Frederick, photographs or any guidance to help me to find out anything about him would be very helpful. Contact Mary Warner at bobmary2@ hotmail.com or write to 62 Sewell Harris Close, Harlow, Essex, CM20 3HB.

HMS Curacao: My father, Stanley Norman Russell, was one of the few survivors of HMS Curacao which tragically collided with RMS Queen Mary on October 2, 1942. I would be interested to hear from anyone who may have known dad who passed away some four years ago or anything about the Curacao. Ironically our local doctor, Dr Arthur Coyer was on the 'Queen' at the time. If you can help please contact Dick Russell at dick. russell@virgin.net or tel: 07970 837953.

HMS Pembroke: David 'Raty' Ratcliffe

NAVY NEWS

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Reporting from the Fleet

and was employed as a steward. He was also on Blake, Upton, Heron and Drake. He is hoping to emigrate to Australia as soon as possible but needs references from anyone that knew him. He will fill you in later with the details - not so much a character reference, he just needs people to state what we actually did as stewards? He would be very grateful for any replies - who knows - he could be your base if you are ever out there. David Ratcliffe, 4 Berwick Drive, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs, PR2 3JS or tel: 01772 788607. Published Poems: I know this is a very

served 1976-81. He was at HMS Pembroke,

served on Ark Royal, 1976-78, in 4R2 mess

long shot, but I am seeking information about the published poems of L/Seaman Jack Redvers Green. His service career spanned both WW1 and WW2, from December 1916 to September 1945, inc Royal Fleet Reserve from 1929 to 1939. The ships L/S Green served on included: Concord, Monarch, Hermes, Vanessa, Dauntless, Sultan, Excellent, Glenroy and Harrow. The last two years of his service were on secondment to the Free Dutch Navy, on board MV van Ruisdael, where he wrote a poem entitled 'The Netherlands Shall Rise Again' (Nederland zal Herryzen). Another poem was published in 'Blighty, June 20, 1942', and was entitled 'Convoy'. However, the Green family (England and Canada) believe that a third poem was published somewhere, and we would like to find out if any reader may remember this, or have a copy in their possession. As I say, this is a very long shot, but any information would be gratefully received. Please contact Mrs Debra Green at debgreen112@ hotmail.com or tel: 01435 863010.

HMS Rothesay: Peter is hoping to find out if there was a commissioning book printed on Rothesay's first commission? If there was, does someone have a copy that they are prepared to let him borrow? He will pay postage and take care of it, returning it after reviving lost memories. Please contact Peter Grindon at grindon_peter@yahoo.co.uk or tel: 01275 373521.

NAVY NEWS

NAVY NEWS

NEPTUNE HAS HIS TRIDENT

Reunions

OCTOBER 2008

Lascaris Malta Association: Reunion, October 6-10 at the Ocean View Hotel, Bournemouth, For details contact Jim Goode at Lascarismalta@aol.com or see the website at http://www.lascarisassoc. britanianet.co.uk or tel: 01584 872225.

EW Branch: Reunion on October 18 at 1930 in the WO & SR Mess at HMS Excellent - bar & buffet. Accommodation for serving and ex-members available. For more information contact 'Farah' Fawcett at fazfawcett@ntlworld.com or tel: 023 9233 3527 or Mil: mws-wtg-ewcis6 or tel: 93825

HMS Illustrious Association: 25th anniversary reunion and 60th anniversary of Pinnace disaster takes place at the Russell Hotel, Weymouth, from October 17 to 20. Contact Mrs Ann Lefley on 01903 771394.

Nuclear Test Sites: A reunion will take place October 17-20 at Sand Bay, Weston Super Mare for all Army, Navy, Air Force and civilians who served in any of the British Nuclear Test Sites: Monte-Bello, Maralinga, Malden Island and Christmas Island from 1952-64. For more details contact Jim Cooper at jim.cooper4@ntlworld.com or tel: 01903 533768.

The Pembrokers Reunion Weekend: takes place at the Suncliff Hotel, East Overcliff Drive, Bournemouth, October 31 to November 3. Anyone interested please contact George Creasy in Medway on 01634 715784 for full details.

Submariners Association (Derbyshire): A coffee morning will take place on October 24 in the Mayors Parlour, Council House, Derby (use the Ceremonial entrance on the corner of Derwent Street). Admission is just 50p and includes coffee and biscuits. Contact Terry Hall, Hon Secretary/Treasurer, Submariners Association at nobbyderbysa@yahoo.co.uk or tel: 07979 424680. Special guests: the Mayor of Derby and the Commanding Officer and crew of Derby's new adopted submarine, HMS Ambush. The sailors will be in uniform on a weekend visit to Derby City.

NOVEMBER 2008 HMS Sirius, F40, 66-93: The 'Down Under' reunion takes place in Plymouth on November 1. Details are available at http://www/hmssirius.info or from Andy Avres at 253-cpouw@a,dii,mod,uk or write to Andy Ayres at HMS Chatham, BFPO 253. Ton-Class Association: Pre-Christmas lunch at High Wycombe on November 29. All

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TCA members and their ladies are invited to the lunch with raffle etc. All enquiries to Edward Freathy at edwardfreathy@btinternet. com or tel: 01628 523711.

JANUARY 2009

841 & 833/842 MEAs: are considering having a reunion in January 2009, 25 years after we signed on the dotted line. Exact time and location to be decided. For further info please contact Steve Wiseman at stevewiseman@hotmail.com or tel: 07979

MARCH 2009

HMS Brilliant: The 2009 reunion will be at the Livermead House Hotel, Torquay, March 27-29. For more details see the website at http://www.hmsbrilliant.com or contact Nick or Julie Spayne at njspayne@hotmail. com or tel: 07789 407042.

HMS Loch Fada Association 1944-67: 12th annual reunion, March 27-30, at the Royal Renaissance Hotel, Skegness. Contact Bob Harris at bobharrisf390@supanet. com, tel: 023 8039 1848 or see the website: http://www.hms-lochfada.org.uk

MAY 2009

HMS Dainty: Reunion of HMS Dainty, May 9-11, at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry. Contact Chris Bolton at chrsbol@aol.com or tel: 0161 773 1304. More information on the website at http://www.hmsdainty.co.uk

JUNE 2009

HMS Euryalus: A special reunion/AGM and gala evening takes place on June 5-6 at the King Charles Hotel, Chatham. For more information contact Barbara Cotton on 01386 438434 or Duke Ellington on 01763 230654

SEPTEMBER 2009

HMS Fisgard, Series 7 Entry, September 12 1949: Following successful reunions for 50 and 55 years a 'Diamond Do' is being organised at Jurys Hotel, Bristol for September 11-13, 2009. Book now to avoid disappointment. Contact Mick Herbert at michael_herbert@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01954 250014 or write to 20 Pelham Way, Cottenham, Cambridge CB24 8TQ

OCTOBER 2009

Lascaris Malta Association: Reunion October 2-5 at the Hilton Hotel, Warwick. For details contact Jim Goode at http://www.lascarisassoc.britanianet. co.uk or tel: 01584 872225.

Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455,

Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555,

Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www.

Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600 RN and RM Service records: 023 9262

Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823,

RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266

British Legion: 08457 725725, www.

RN Community: www.rncom.mod.uk

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To join contact:

Richard: 01752 787697

email: richard.tipping@

blueyonder.co.uk

www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

0296 (grants), www.rnbt.org.uk

www.mod.uk

www.royalnavy.mod.uk

veteransagency.mod.uk

8779 or 023 9262 8667

britishlegion.org.uk

Where are you now?

HMS Albion 1962-64: Where are all the original 'Grey Ghosts'? Currently in touch with 155 from the original Grey Ghost Commission. Do you want to be No 156? Contact Keith Ridley at hmsalbion@hotmail. com or tel: 01480 810848 or 18 Littleworth End, Offord Darcy, St Neots, PE19 5RA.

HMS Andromeda: Trying to locate Tim Symonds who was at HMS Nelson with Scouse' Lunt in the mid 1970s. Tim had a wife, Kath and two sons, they all lived in Buckland, Portsmouth. Scouse was on the Andromeda from 1988-90 before his last shore base at Nelson. Scouse is 60 in December and there will be a surprise (not if he reads this) party on December 13. It would be wonderful if any old shipmates could get in touch. Contact Mandy Lunt at mandy@ careconnectlearn.co.uk or tel 07940 205206.

Ordinary Seaman T Bishop: Tony is looking for this seaman or even a relative or anyone who knew him. Tony has located his medals and would like to return them. Contact Tony Davie, RMA Basingstoke, 26 Petty's Brook Road, Chineham, Hants, RG24 8RW or tel: 01256 472340.

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: Did you ever serve in Bulwark, Albion or Centaur? The association is open to anyone who served at any time on these ships. Magazine three times per year plus events including AGM/Social, sea-days and anniversary commemorations. Whilst our 'Home Port' is Pompey, next year's AGM and Social will be at Sand Bay Holiday Village, Weston Super Mare, Somerset. We also sponsor sea cadets from our affiliated SCCs on the training ship 'Royalist'. Membership is just £8 per annum. Enquiries to Leigh Easton at ngsfo@tiscali.co.uk or website http:// www.bulwarkassoc.plus.com or write to Glenmoray, Hayford Place, Cambusbarron, Stirling, FK7 9JX.

HMS Collingwood: Seeking anyone on Artificer Apprentice Series 48 Course between May 1964 and April 1966. Do you remember a New Zealander called David D'Rose? He injured a leg whilst on the Collingwood display team just before graduation. Anyone remembering anything about David should contact Margaret Snow at margarets@rnzrsa.org.nz or write to Senior Advisory Officer (Pensions & Welfare), Royal New Zealand Returned And Services' Association, PO Box 27-248, Wellington 6141, New Zealand.

Cumberland Association:

Naval Families Federation: 023 9265

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975,

Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562,

Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565

Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385,

RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217,

National Maritime Museum: 020 8312

Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320,

4374, www.nff.org.uk

www.fleetairarm.com

www.rnsubmus.co.uk

6565, www.nmm.ac.uk

www.iwm.org.uk

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in

www.royalnavalmuseum.org

www.royalmmarinesmuseum.co.uk

www.ssafa.org.uk

Seeking information about ERA 2nd class Ronald Frederick May, HMS Gambia 1949-52 and HMS Cumberland 1953. Contact Sam Watson at sjwba11003@blueyonder.

co.uk or tel: 01634 235861. HMS Exmouth: Doug Taylor, A/B TAS rate onboard HMS Exmouth 1968-71, got in touch with Mickey Dunne through a Forces website. Mickey has so far been unable to contact Doug. If anyone knows of Doug's address could they contact Mickey Dunne at michael.dunne7@ntlworld.com or tel:

01325 258193. HMS Ganges: Does anyone know the whereabouts of, or remember, Gordon Blight? He came from Hornchurch and in the late 1940s joined the RN as a boy at Ganges. becoming a telegraphist. Leaving the service he joined Essex constabulary as a Police Constable. Two former friends from our Sea Cadet days together would like to reestablish contact with him. Contact Colin Musson, 28 Queen Street, Cookstown, Ontario, LOL 1L0, Canada.

HMS Keppel: Gordon recently attended the unveiling of a plaque containing the names of the 217 men who died when HMS Kite was torpedoed in 1944. The only living survivor was unable to attend and Gordon was the only member of HMS Keppel's crew (the ship with HMS Kite), and says it was strange feeling realising that he was the only one there who had witnessed the sinking. He was also wondering if there were any other members of the Keppel's crew still around and if so he would love to hear from you. Contact Gordon Copson at gordon. copson@ntlworld.com or tel: 01708

Leslie Kew: Pam Holmes is seeking her dad's (George Frederick Kew) brother Leslie. They also had a sister Doris. Leslie enlisted in the Navy from Burnham Gardens, Hayes, Middlesex, from where he was living with the Adams family. He went to Lossiemouth for training. If anyone has any information could they contact Pamela Holmes at pamela. holmes3@ntlworld.com or tel: 0151 201

HMS Swiftsure: Kenneth Smart served in Swiftsure from 1951 to 53. He would love to get in touch with any former shipmates. Kenneth can be contacted via his daughter at hayley.coombs@ntlworld.com or tel: 01223 514137 or write to 9 Butcher Close, Milton, Cambridge, CB24 6ED.

Assignments

Lt Col Steve Hussey to 845 NAS as CO on July 15.

Rear Adm R J Ibbotson to be promoted vice admiral and to become Deputy Commander in Chief Fleet on April 7 2009.

Competition

Congratulations to the five winners of the Southampton Boat Show competition who each won a

Mr M Laxon, Brentry Mr A Craske, Prestatyn Mr M Pearce, Croesyceiliog C J N Young, Verwood Mrs N Hamp, Ferndown The ten winners of the Yeovilton

pair of tickets:

Air Day competition were: Mr T Simpkins, Leeds Jim Silver, Ruddington Andrew Lee, Collompton Chris Jenkins, Portchester Mr Nicholson, Charlton Adam Stephen Smith, High Wycombe Mrs Ann Harlow, Callington

Terry Tyacke, Trowbridge Dean Witherington, Longlevens Steve Wright, Ryde

Navy News on audio

Navy News is available free of charge on tape or as a digital file from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number. No special equipment is needed to play the standard 90-minute cassettes

GALATEA (Black Pig)

Ist ever Reunion. Proposed date Sat 28th March 2009. Venue pending - 35 shipmates contacted. Contact No's: Bill Davidson: 01322 221028 **Bob Almey:** Email: BOB ALMEY 1@tiscali.co.uk

November's Noticeboard must be received by October 13 Swap drafts

Logs Pers Jenni Conning. Would like to swap DNR DAT Manchester (possible SSSA) from November 08 to November 09 for any Portsmouth area draft. Contact:

HMS Illustrious-WTR14. ET(WE) Clark. Currently on HMS Bangor based in Faslane. Looking for a swap draft to Portsmouth, any shore draft, Hunt-class MCMV, Type 23 or Type 42. Must be trained in 30mm, Mk44 and GPMG. Contact Nobby on Faslane ext 6968 or etwe-222@a.dii.mod

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IMPORTANT 'Sea of Remembrance' Many readers have kindly responded to the Sailors' Society

recent mailing which was included in the last edition of Navy News and we have received many red ensign flags with messages. Unfortunately many people did not include their name and address so that we could not only thank them but also claim the gift aid on their gift. PLEASE GET IN TOUCH so we can claim the tax and add value to your gift, and thank you. Call now 023 8051 5950, email ryoung@sailors-society.org. Sailors Society is a registered charity 237778.

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Deaths

Lt Cdr lan Fraser, DSC VC RD and Bar. Wartime submariner. Attended HMS Conway training ship in the Mersey and joined the Blue Funnel Line going to sea as a cadet in 1938. At the outbreak of war he joined the Royal Navy and trained in Royal Oak as a midshipman RNR then served in Keith, Mon-trose (Dunkirk) and Malcolm mostly in the Atlantic. He volunteered for the submarine service in 1942 and was awarded the DSC after a year of intensive operations with the submarine Sahib when she sank U301 and several Axis supply ships. Appointed first lieutenant of H44 then volunteered for X-craft in response to a signal for "special and hazardous service with submarines". Won the Victoria Cross as captain of the midget submarine XE3 in Operation Struggle, a daring attack on the Japanese heavy cruiser Takao in the Jahore Straits, just before the end of World War 2. 1945 he was appointed an Of-ficer of the US Legion of Merit. Discharged 1947 he remained on the Reserve list until 1965. His memoirs, Frogman VC, were published in 1957. He was awarded the Reserve Decoration with Long Service Bar, was vicepresident of the Merseyside Branch of the Submarine Old Comrades' Association and a Younger Brother of Trinity House. Since 2002 he had been UK vice-chairman of the VC/GC Association. September 1. Aged 87.

Rear Admiral Anthony Albert Murphy. Joined the RN in 1942 as hostilities only rating. In 1944 commissioned in the RNVŔ and served as a radar officer at Western Approaches Command. Promoted to lieutenant in the electrical branch, serving in Vanguard until 1949; then Instructor at Collingwood, Senior Divisional Officer Fisguard, Chatham dockyard, Bulwark (Suez crisis) and Naval Assistant to Director Naval Electrical department. Promoted to commander 1960 and appointed Squadron Electrical Officer in Yarmouth (Kuwait), Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment and Weapons Electrical Officer Eagle. Promoted to captain 1967 he served on the staff of Director General Weapons at Bath until 1970 when he was appointed to Defence Procurement. CO of Collingwood 1973 he was promoted to Rear Admiral 1977 and was Special Projects Director at Directorate General of Weapons 1977-83 when he retired. August 9. Aged 84.

Cdre 'Black Sam' Dunlop RFA DSO. Went to sea in 1939 and was an apprentice in the Bank Line ship Cedarbank in Buenos Aires when war was declared and he sailed with her for home; then Empire Marvell as third and then second officer. He volunteered for the RN but as an experienced deck officer was not released from the Bank Line until August 1943 when he joined the RFA. His first ship was Cedardale ferrying oil from the Gulf to the Sychelles before joining the British Pacific Fleet in Sydney. She supported the invasion of Okinawa and was one of the first ships to enter the newly-liberated Hong Kong in 1945. After hostilities, he became second officer of Brown Ranger and later commanded the aviation training ship Engadine. In 1977 he was appointed Commodore of the RFA and given command of the newly-commissioned Gold Rover; he then commanded Fort Austin throughout the Falklands War loaded down with ammunition, remaining in San Carlos Water operating Sea King helicopters searching for submarines; he was the first Merchant Navy officer to win the DSO since World War 2. Honorary member of the Fleet Air Arm Officers' Association. July 17.

Ronald George Edward Dowle. PO (Gunnery Ty). Joined Impregnable, Devonport 1936. Served in Royal Oak (1936), Glorious 1938 surviving her sinking off Norway 1940 and being rescued by Norwegian fishing vessel after four days exposure on Carley float in Arctic waters. After lengthy hospitalisation served in Prince Charles (Dieppe raid 1943), Ariadne (from build 1943) conducting offensive minelaying during BPF campaign; discharged medical 1947. Emigrated to Australia; long-serving member Ballina Sub branch, Returned Services League (RSL) and Glorious, Ardent and Acasta (GLARAC) Association. August 6 at Cessnock NSW. Aged 87.

Cdr Douglas Hunt DSC*. Joined the RNVR in 1939 and served in Renown, part of Force H. Commissioned in 1941 and served in small craft; in 1944 as a sub lieutenant he was 2iC of MTB 83 landing agents on the Dutch coast when he engaged with an enemy convoy off Terschelling, attacking he was frustrated when both torpedoes misfired; in September he was the senior officer of four MTBs fighting a superior force of armed trawlers off Scheveningen when the thin wooden hull of his MTB 245 was smashed by a 3in shell. The inrush of water through the hole doused the flames but the rudder was lost. He continued co-ordinating the attack while steering by his engines and

succeeded in torpedoing an armed trawler at 1,500 yards; he was awarded a DSC and Bar. In 1945 he took command of MTB 392 and after becoming senior officer of 31st MTB Flotilla he retired in 1946 to found the MTB/MGB Officers' Association and he organised reunions for the next 60 years. July

8. Aged 91. WO1 Coxswain Simon James Slater. Submariner. Served 1974-2008; starting at Ganges as a Junior Assistant Steward Second class; Pembroke for his professional training then Osprey and Fyfe; Dolphin for submarine training (rated Leading Steward) then Spartan, (rated PO) served in Otus and Superb (Coxswain training at Dolphin), Tire-less, Talent, Upholder and Trafalgar; (promot-ed WO Coxswain), CSST WO Coxswain and Raleigh as WOSMS. Awarded MBE for conceiving, planning and establishing a submarine heritage centre in Raleigh. Retired April after 34 years service. August. Aged 50.

Frank Balcombe. AB. Served in Eagle, Malta Convoys (Pedestal) and Vienna, HMS Eagle Survivors Association. August 20.

Thomas Henry Freeman. CPO. Last served Antrim and at Dolphin. August 17. Aged 74.

Lt Dennis 'Knocker' White FAA. Served 1945-65. Last served as second in command 759 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Brawdy in Pembrokeshire. August 13. Aged 80.

Robert Bryan 'Buckeye' 'Bobby' Lewis (brother of Smiler below). AB. Served in Consort (Yangste and Korea), Zambezi and Veryan Bay (South Atlantic). February 11.

William George 'Smiler' Lewis (brother of Buckeye above). AB. Served 1942 until end of war in Loch Lomond, Far East; present at the signing of surrender of Tokyo Bay. Part of boarding party to tow U862 from Jahore to be sunk. August 25. Aged 82.

Kenneth 'Dusty' Mellor. Ldg Stoker. Served 1939-45 in West Indies Fleet, Caradoc and Mediterranean. Landings on LCI. August 30. Aged 89.

Edward Barry 'Baz' Nixon. L/S (Sonar). Served 1952-64 at Dolphin and in submarines Vanguard, Aeneas and Oberon, August 22. Aged 71.

Thomas Kallachan Bain, ALRO(T), Entered Ganges 1965 and served until 1982 at many establishments and in HMS London; was one of the last serving RN personnel to leave Malta pulling down the Union Jack for the last time. August 20. Aged 58.

John Chapman. Torpedo Man. Served 1944-46 in 6th Destroyer Flotilla, Caprice, King George V and Faulknor. August 30.

Mike Fields, CPOMA. Served 1961-83 in Grafton, Intrepid, Minerva and at RNH Stonehouse. September 7. Aged 65.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION Dick Fulford. PO Writer. Served 1940-46 in Anson and Kent, Market Harborough

branch, July, Aged 91. Mick Bogue. Past secretary South Liver-

pool branch. July 31. Aged 61. Ernie Holtby . Radar op. HMS Swiftsure. Served 1943-46 in Pacific. Swiftsure asso-

ciation and chairman Scarborough RNA past 17 years. August 15. Aged 82. Lt Cdr R L 'Ted' Edwards. Served 1938-65 Royal Indian Navy, Theseus and Alert.

Seaford branch. August 5. Aged 88. Bertram Alfred Forrest, SAM1 FAA. Nuneaton branch. August 13. Aged 80.

Lt 'Bill' Clark. Joined HMS Ganges as a boy 1935; man's time commenced 1937 becoming an officer 1946. Served in Royal Sovereign, Nelson, Victory, Glasgow, Drake, Effingham, Dunedin, Royal Oak (survivor of sinking), Cochrane, Truscan, Gambia, Sussex, Collingwood, Duke of York, Terror, Sea Eagle, Hartland Point, Rook, Adamant and Bellerophon. Retired 1969. President Lon-

donderry branch. August 17. Aged 89. Gwen Price. Former Basildon branch social secretary. August 17. Aged 72. Doris 'Dotti' King. Associate member

Plymouth branch. August 11. Aged 85. Charlie Howell. Served in World War 2 in HMS Kimberley. Oswestry branch. August 8.

Peter Wicks. Frinton and Walton. August

Lt Jim Jarman RNVR. Served Lochailort, Medina, Armadillo, St Kilda, LBE 49 and 47 during Normandy landings. Author of Wallowing Beauties recording experiences of barges at Normandy. Algerines Association

and Chichester RNA. August 27. Aged 84.

Mike P Pearson. L/Sea(TM). Served 1948-60 at Ganges and in Comus and Newfoundland. City of Inverness RNA. September 6. Aged 77.

Paul Cutler. Associate member (ex-Army) and committee member Swaffham. Septem-

Trevor 'Henry' Hooper. CPO Submariner. Served 1958-83 joining at Ganges and serving on submarines Astute, Acheron, Thermopolae, Valiant and in later years Repulse and Revenge (Stbd crews) at Faslane; finally submarine stores at Devonport. Plymouth RNA. September 8. Aged 65.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

J D 'James' Carter. CRS. Served 1940-54 in submarines Cachalot, Thrasher, Supreme, Seanymph, Alderney, Tantalus, Seascout, Sidon, Trenchant and Talent. Colchester. Aged 87.

F 'Frank' Golding. Ck. Served in submarine Scythian. London branch.

D C 'Don' Lydon. LME. Served 1958-70 in submarines Totem, Astute and Osiris. London and N. Ireland branches. Aged 72. A M K 'Tony' Morgan. AB GL. Served

Alaric (54-57). Welsh branch. Aged 76. ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

1954-57 in submarines Tradewind (P3) and

Capt J C Appleyard-List. Served in Cheviot, Maryton, Bermuda, Kent, Mercury,

Cleopatra and Glamorgan.

Cdr P T Bryant. Served in Aurora, Nile,
Raleigh, Gravelines, Sirius, Tamar, Vigo, Sultan and Victory

Cdr R L Edwards. Served in Stopford, Berrry Head, Theseus, Nuthatch, Alert, Bellerophon, Blackcap, Aphrodite and Presi-

Capt J R Gower DSC. Served in Queen Elizabeth, Barham, Shropshire, St Vincent, Albury, Bedouin, Orwell, Eaton College, Highflyer, Devonshire, President, Diana and

Lt Cdr H Walker. Served in Goldcrest, Murray, Collingwood, Lion and President. Cdr I A S Wedderburn. Served in Ajax, Malabar, Boxer, Dryad, Tyne, Eagle, Terror

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION Sub Lt Robert Pratt. Served in Ossory.

Aged 85. Peter J Tooley. OD. Served in Loyalty. Aged 83. Alan Sweeney. L/Sig. Served in Lennox.

William Peyton. Sig. Served in Marvel.

July 10. Aged 79. Fred Potter. Able Seaman. Served in Pelorus, August 8, Aged 87,

Thomas Mackie, L/Sea, Served in Arcturus and Fly. August 21. Aged 87. Roy Wilson. Sto.Mech. Served in Pickle. August 22. Aged 81.

Lt Jim Jarman RNVR. Served in St Kilda. August 27. Aged 84. Ron Chaston, Std. Served in Nerissa, Au-

gust 27. Aged 81. William Mitchell. Wtr. Served in Pickle. August 30. Aged 81.

Sports lottery

August 16: £5,000 - Mne M Gagliardini, 45 Cdo RM; £1,500 - CPOCT D L Fulshaw, RAF Digby; £500 - Lt K A Hurley, MDHU Derriford.

August 23: £5,000 - LLogs S N Harley, 815 NAS; £1,500 - CPOAWT D M Cross, HMS Montrose; £500 - Cdr M Goldthorpe, HMS Rooke.

August 30: £5,000 - POMEA J J Farrell, HMS Northumberland; £1,500 - Sub Lt O J Shepherd, HMS Edinburgh; £500 – LSA C A Fraser-Shaw, NATT Iraq. September 6: £5,000 - Lt I W Thomson,

MWC Portsdown; £1,500 - OMC2 L M Hine, HMS Manchester: £500 - Mne S Town, 40 September 13: £5,000 - MEM2 C W

Dullaghan, HMS Trafalgar; £1,500 - MA1 P J Whitney, HMS Lancaster; £500 - MEM D A Wilson, HMS Sultan.

THE OF YOUR LIVES

October 1968

A Russian presence added unexpected realism to a NATO maritime exercise which was taking part from the North Sea to the Atlantic coasts. More than 100 ships and aircraft of nine nations took part in the manoeuvres, which were shadowed by Soviet reconnaissance bombers, in association with seven ships. Nevertheless, the constant surveillance from the vessels provided the NATO forces with an excellent training opportunity.

October 1978

A Sea King helicopter of 814 Squadron turned into a different type of vessel after it ditched in the sea while returning to HMS Hermes from Plymouth. A major gearbox oil leak caused the helicopter to hit the water, but the skill of the pilot, Lt Keith Dudley, kept the HMS Sea King upright and floating.

October 1988

HMS Active (pictured right) was called upon to provide disaster relief in the Caribbean in the wake of Hurricane Gilbert. The ship's work included clearing debris, re-roofing buildings, helping restore power supplies and providing thousands of hot meals to the devastated regions.



NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
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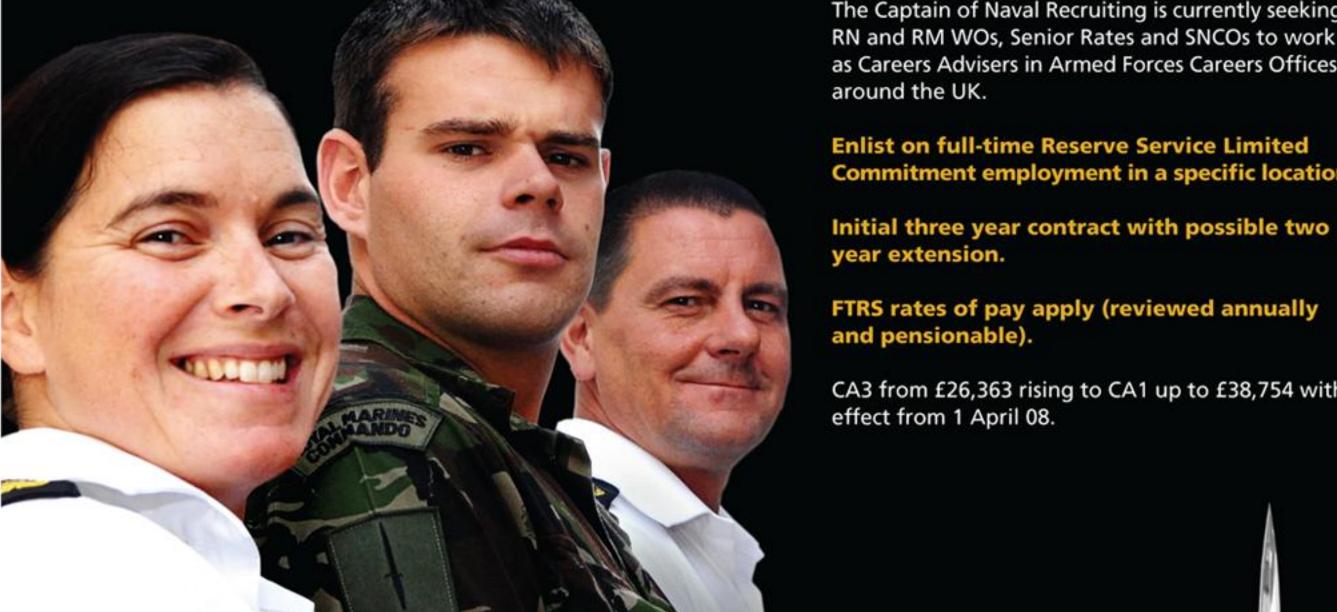
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Engineering, in addition to relevant RN experience, you could
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RN Ratings with relevant experience will need to pass AIB and attend short courses at BRNC and HMS Sultan.

Medical Technicians

As an RFA Medical Technician you would be responsible for the provision of all aspects of emergency, primary and occupational healthcare on board RFA ships at sea worldwide.

You will be used to working alone and unsupervised. Candidates should hold indate Advanced Life Support, Defibrillation, pre-Hospital Care and First Aid Instructor qualifications. The ideal candidates will be ex-RN Medical Branch Senior Rates.

There may also be openings for qualified Ratings in other branches – deck, engineering, catering or communications.

For further information or an application form, phone RFA Recruitment on 08456 04 05 20 or visit rfa.mod.uk.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary is an equal opportunities employer.



A new life in New Zealand

THE Royal New Zealand Navy is responsible for the maritime defence of New Zealand and operates throughout the Pacific and South Asia.

The Navy is expanding, with six brand new ships arriving over the next 12 months, which means it is recruiting personnel with current or previous military experience from the UK right now.

CPOMT(P) Tim Clubb joined the RNZN last year and is now serving as a Marine Engineer.

Tim said: "After 22 years in the Royal Navy I needed a new challenge and when I saw the RNZN recruiting ad I decided to apply."

"The RNZN is small in comparison to the RN, but this makes for a relaxed atmosphere.

"It's a much more flexible and friendly place to work.

"Your opinion, wants and needs definitely count for more."

"I am currently posted to HMNZS Manawanui (pictured above), which is a purpose-built diving support ship. I have endorsed my qualifications and am attending my Charge Qualifying Course.

"I love every minute of it and have absolutely no regrets about the move.

"If you want more opportunities, brand new ships, shorter deployments to more interesting places, a relaxed family friendly atmosphere and to be based in one home port – this is for you!"

Lt Dave Barr also joined the RNZN last year and is the Navigator onboard HMNZS Endeavour.

Dave said: "Since being in NZ I've been exploring the North Island: visiting the Bay of Islands, skiing at Mt Ruepehu and generally having a fantastic time."

"That's the ethos of the RNZN

– at the end of work it's down
tools and head out to enjoy the
lifestyle... we work to live!

"For a young and single person there's so much opportunity to experience new things in the RNZN."

If you also want to have a great time in NZ then look at the website – www.navy.mil.nz/join-us/uk or give them a bell on +649 445 5071.

Sharpen up your skills

IN TODAY'S competitive market, studying for a new skill can give you the edge, indicate your commitment to learning and show you are taking charge of your own development.

A level 3 qualification does much to improve promotion and employment prospects and is an achievement of which you can be proud.

Martin Ladd, formerly a captain in the Royal Navy and now director of the Hampshire-based training company Brighter Prospects Limited, engaged in the Skills Accounts project said: "These are the very good reasons why people should be opening an Skills Account today."

The Learning and Skills Council comment that learning something new could be your first step towards earning more money and opening up new opportunities for you.

Martin continued: "We were selected by the Learning and Skills Council to be one of the training providers in the Skills Accounts trial in the south-east of England.

"The Skills Account scheme is restricted to the south-east region as a pilot and to certain areas in the north-west of England too.

"Courses can then be spread over six to 12 months depending upon your choice of qualification and flexi-hours learning frequency."

Martin added: "The Brighter Prospects Limited Partnership offers two level 3 specialist qualifications backed up by high quality Pitman Training courses, some of which can be studied wholly or partially by distance learning, allowing study in-centre, at home or at work."

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thought studying for a degree but wondered how you would fit it in with your duties?

Studying for a degree with the Open University (OU), whether it's for your career in the Armed Forces, for personal interest or to give you a competitive edge in the civilian workforce, is flexible and can be fitted around your schedule.

More than 4,000 Service personnel are currently benefiting from the OU's first-class distance learning facilities and its established partnership with the Armed Forces.

Not only can you sit your exams overseas, you will also be eligible for funding (the OU is ELCapproved) and you only pay UK prices for the courses, wherever your duties may take you.

To make life easier, the OU sends you all your course materials and you have the support of a tutor throughout your studies who you can contact by phone or email.

How long you take to complete your degree is up to you - if your work commitments need to take priority for a while, your degree won't suffer.

The OU offers a wide range of degrees and qualifications and you can choose from over

580 courses in 12 subject areas - from business and and management, sciences engineering to mathematics and social sciences.

The OU also have a range of qualifications such as the Foundation Degree in Sport, Fitness and Health and the Foundation Degree in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), which allows you to take on undergraduate studies while you are serving.

If you are leaving the forces and planning a career in civilian life, an OU qualification, which is widely respected by many major employers - and recognised by many professions - will ensure you are well positioned to start on a new career.

Whatever your motivations the OU is here to help you achieve your potential.

To find out how the OU can help with your Armed Forces career, your personal development and re-training visit www. openuniversity.ac.uk/forces or call 0845 366 6052.

All service personnel are eligible for Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC), which can be used to fund training while in service and up to ten years after leaving the service.

Your seagoing experience is useful

DO you have experience of marine operations? Looking for your next career move? Interested in a shore-based management position which will exploit your skill base?

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With at least one harbour master in every commercial and recreational port across the world, from Aberaeron to Zuara, this is a truly international career opportunity.

An ideal entry route is the Diploma for Harbour Masters course, which is currently enrolling for the November 2008 intake. The course is undertaken by distance learning allowing you to study at your own pace whilst continuing your current job.

Designed to meet the international knowledge needs of the modern Harbour Master it covers all aspects of port safety and security management, the direction of vessels and recreational craft, supervision of staff, and emergency response.

The diploma also trains participants in today's pilotage and VTS operations, financial budgeting as well as the additional daily tasks and challenges faced by Harbour Masters.

If you're looking to progress or kick-start your career in the ports industry, this course will fulfil your needs.

On successfully completing the course, participants gain an academically-accredited diploma, providing an internationallyrecognised qualification.

The course is recognised by the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency as a professional foundation and development distance-learning course, it qualifies for 100 Continuing Professional Development points from the UK Harbour Masters Association and is also supported by the International Harbour Masters Association, amongst other bodies.

To find out more visit www. ibcglobalacademy.com/hm, or call Alamgir Ahmed on +44 (0)20 7017 5804 or email alamgir.ahmed@informa.com.

Quote reference VIP No: LM1091/Navy

Martial instructor

GREG Alison, former Royal Marine Commando and now Metropolitan Police Officer, is turning a passion for boxing and martial arts into a new exciting career as a professional instructor.

Greg hooked up with two former soldiers who run the L2 Martial Arts Instructor Training Course and following the five-day course this is what he had to say.

"I have recently completed the L2 Martial arts instructor training course, and I can honestly say it exceeded my expectations.

"The whole process of launching your own martial arts school is systematically explained and drilled into you.

instructors are the top martial arts Military Martial Arts Association. entrepreneurs in the UK. I would recommend the course to anyone serious about running their own business.

"Prepare for success!"

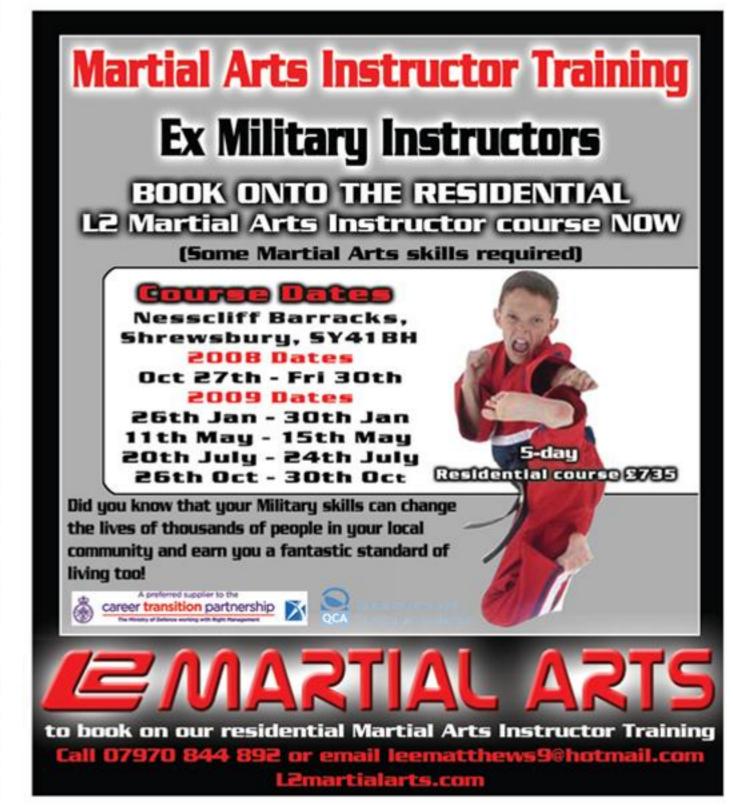
Greg was so inspired by course founders former RMP Lee Sansum and former Para Lee Matthews whose businesses turnover in excess of £1 million per year, that he is now preparing to run his new business full time.

The Martial Arts Industry is crying out for former Service people especially Royal Marines who can use their military training and experiences to teach the civilian community discipline, team work and fitness and become a role model for their community.

Greg commented: "I am looking forward to working for myself and having the freedom to spend time with my family. Also being ex-military I get the added bonus of being personally mentored by the two Lees, and getting access to continuation training weekends, adventure training weeks and trips abroad with a network of ex-military guys "It's easy to see why the who are all instructors with the

The martial arts industry has seen phenomenal growth over the last ten years and is set for even more growth over the next ten.

This could be a great opportunity for Marines who have some martial arts, self defence or boxing skills who are resettling into civilian life and would like to run their own full-time business or operate a part-time martial arts school.



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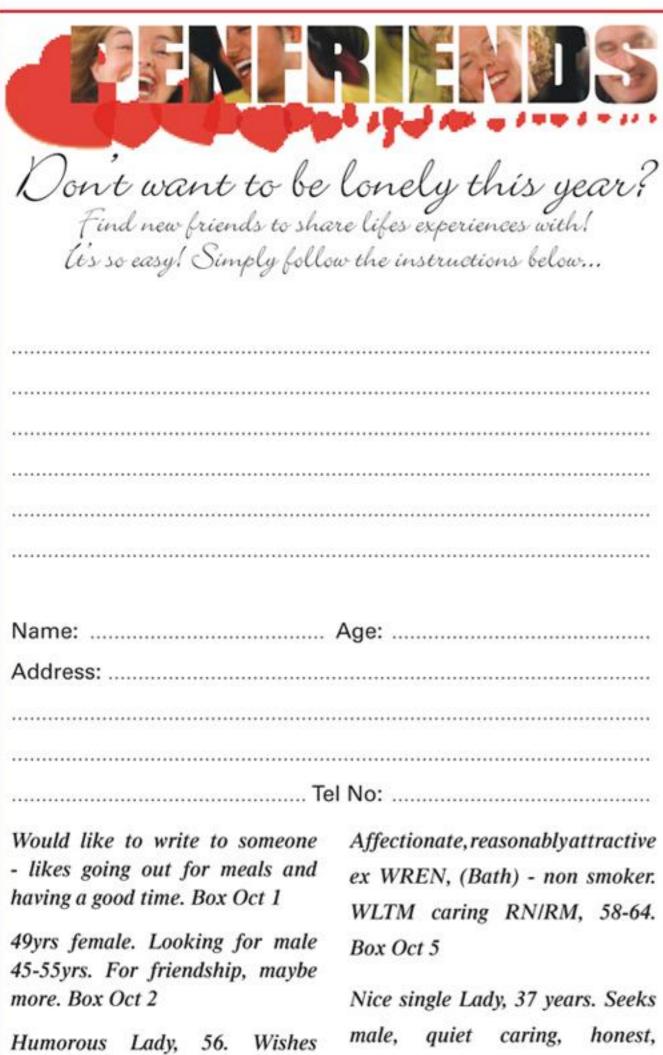
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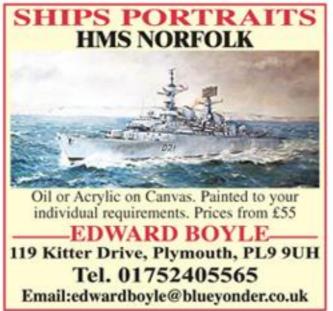
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SEA CADETS

Sea Scouts are back from the wilderness

SIX Sea Scouts have returned home safely after tackling the Canadian wilderness.

The 16 and 17-year-old members of the **Knowle** group travelled to Winnipeg where they were met by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba.

The team then headed a long way north to Red Lake, the base camp from which they paddled 150 miles through a vast network of lakes and rivers, including treks of more than 25 miles through dense woodland.

More than 500kg of kit, including tents, cookers, food and survival gear, had to be carried.

No bears were spotted, but mosquitoes and leeches had taken their toll by the time the scouts headed back to civilisation and a reception hosted by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

Their tour ended with visits to Niagara Falls, the CN Tower in Toronto and Canada's Wonderland theme park.

Apart from ticking the relevant box for the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards, the expedition also included an environmental improvement project and the study of an ancient pictograph site – pictographs are amongst the earliest forms of writing.

Bristol unit retains prized burgee

BRISTOL (Avonmouth) unit has retained the burgee which the cadets won last year – and are now planning for an even stiffer test next year.

This year's unit review, undertaken by Lt Cdr Alison Fowler RNR, District Officer for the Avon District, was described by Bristol CO Lt (SCC) Barbara Hillier RNR as being like a school's OFSTED inspection.

Bristol held a pennant in 2006, which signifies a place in the top 50 per cent of the Corps, but replaced that last year with a burgee, which marked a step up to the top ten per cent of units.

The unit review included an inspection of the cadets, after which Lt Cdr Fowler and her staff examined the activities of the unit and the promotions and qualifications gained over the past year.

The lads and lasses of TS
Enterprise are now looking
forward to a swimming gala,
the Trafalgar Night dinner, the
Festival of Remembrance at
the Colston Hall in November,
and a potential visit to see the
Blackpool illuminations as guests
of the local unit TS Penelope.



Basingstoke and Deane cadets on their trip down the River Thames

River pull tests crew

CADETS from the Basingstoke and Deane unit TS Mary Rose have taken a cruise down the River Thames – though it wasn't quite as relaxing as it sounds.

The sponsored pull proved an interesting diversion from the village fairs, school fêtes and training weekends which the cadets attend in force.

Their journey down the Thames from Reading to Windsor over a weekend saw them cover 32 miles and traversed 11 locks, stopping overnight at the Marlow unit TS Apollo on the Saturday and being hosted for lunch at the Maidenhead unit on Sunday.

The sponsorship money is still

New XO at Carron

PETTY Officer Sean Fraser has been appointed First Lieutenant of the **Stonehaven** unit.

Previously the Unit Training Officer, Range Officer and First Aid Instructor for TS Carron, PO Fraser took over from unit stalwart Lt Morag Reid, who after ten years as Officer in Charge of Stonehaven and then First Lieutenant has now stood down.

But that is not the end of her involvement with the Stonehaven cadets, and she promises she will be around to play her part.

Meanwhile four members of staff and ten cadets were involved in the National Combined Regatta, ensuring that an enviable record is maintained.

Stonehaven has now represented Scotland and North England at the 'Nationals' for a 48th consecutive time – a record they believe is unmatched by any other unit in the Corps.

being collected but already more than £500 has been banked.

A/CPO (SCC) Peter Juul, the OiC of Basingstoke unit, and PO (SCC) Bruce Wake both received awards from Basingstoke Community Forum.

The Special Achievement Awards were presented by the Mayor of Basingstoke Cllr George Hood, himself an ex-sea cadet.

The Mary Rose Trust in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard invited the unit to provide a guard during the annual memorial service to those who died when Henry VIII's flagship foundered off Southsea in 1545.

The Mary Rose was one of the most powerful warships in the world at that time, but she had undergone major refits and rebuilds throughout her life, which resulted in design faults.

There is no definitive answer as to why she sank, but it is thought that as she sailed out into the Solent to meet a French fleet she heeled over in a gust of wind and water poured into her lower gunports, which were barely four feet above the waves.

The memorial service was held in Portsmouth Cathedral in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth.

The Trust then invited the cadets to the Dockyard to visit the ship and museum.



TS Mary Rose cadets work through a lock on the River Thames

Missing boat is spotted on M62

A CHANCE encounter on a motorway has led to the return of some property which was stolen from the **Sefton** unit earlier this year.

The unit's rigid inflatable boat and trailer, 18 canoes, paddles and spray decks were stolen in April when thieves forced their way through a security fence and metal doors into the cadets' headquarters.

Last month unit CO A/CPO Ken Griffiths SCC was driving along the M62 when he spotted a familiar-looking boat under tow in the opposite direction.

He switched direction at the next junction and followed the driver for around 40 miles until the man, realising he was being followed, drove into a cul-de-sac in the back streets of Manchester.

Ken had already alerted the police, who turned up in force to speak to the driver.

The matter is now in the hands of Merseyside police for further investigation.

"After a quick once-over I found some bits were damaged and others missing, but nothing that can't be sorted," said CPO Griffiths.

"It's just a pity they didn't have my canoes as well..."

Blackburn still wait...

MEMBERS of the Blackburn unit will have to continue to meet at a changing room at the local reservoir while plans for a new HQ are pursued.

A report in August's Navy News told of an award for unit CO Lt Gavin Redhead, quoting from the citation which spoke of a new HQ building.

But according to unit management committee secretary Eileen Eastham, plans have been scuppered by a clause which grants planning permission with the proviso that the proposed building (costing over £100,000) be demolished and the site returned to its former state in five years time.

Captain tours minesweeper

THE VIP visitor steps aboard your ship just as a mechanical fault causes total power failure. An exercise maybe? Show the top banana how you cope in a crisis?

In the case of the former Ton-class minesweeper HMS lveston, it was probably just an age thing.

Whatever the reason, Capt Jonathan Fry, Captain Sea Cadets, was able to witness at first hand the can-do attitude

of the Corps as the DMEO of the old ship, CPO Dickson, slipped off to sort things out.

Capt Fry, who provides operational leadership to the Corps, is a serving MEO and professional head of the ME sub-branch.

But he never trained aboard the Navy's 'small ships' – and said he was glad he didn't, looking at the cramped confines of the old ship. Iveston is now owned by the

Thurrock unit, while other units from Essex and beyond also visit for extensive training.

Capt Fry's visit to Tilbury was a personal one – though his professional curiosity meant he did get a good look at the engine room during a ship's tour with Thurrock XO and MEO Lt (SCC) George Wilson RNR (pictured on left with Capt Fry).

Not only did Capt Fry say he enjoyed his visit, but he also volunteered to return to help maintain the ship – an offer gratefully received.

He also plans to visit again early next year when a marine engineering course will be held on the ship.



 Bethan Halliday in HMS Clyde's sickbay practising cannulation on a training arm under the watchful eye of LMA Brown

Bethan samples life on the Clyde

MOST students of the Falklands Community College do work experience in the community; some venture further afield.

15-year-old Bethan Halliday made the most of her link with TS Endurance – she has been with the Falkland Islands unit since the age of ten – to undertake work experience in HMS Clyde.

Although Bethan's family run a bakery in Stanley, making logistics is a possibility, Bethan is interested in a career as a medical assistant.

After an interview with Lt Cdr Jonathan Lett, CO of Clyde,

Bethan's work experience was approved and she joined the ship on a routine six-day patrol.

Bethan spent much of her time with Clyde's 'Doc', LMA Graham Brown, undertaking a variety of tasks, from sickbay administration to casualty exercises and first aid.

Lt Cdr Lett said: "It has been a pleasure to have Bethan on board and she has been a credit to her family, her school and to TS Endurance," adding that her application to join the Navy would have his full support.

Ship of the Month - p12



SEA CADETS



Areas clash at **ExCel** national regatta

TEAMS from the North of England and Scotland travelled south to take on the might of the other regions in the Sea Cadets National Combined Regatta.

And although the results did not necessarily go their way throughout, the 63-strong northern team worked hard to make their mark at ExCel, the conference and exhibition centre in London which is earmarked as a venue at the 2012 Olympics Games.

The winning teams were (Northern team in bold italic): Boat pulling:

Boys: Eastern Open (Northampton), Peterhead

Junior Boys: North West (Wallasey), Dalbeattie/ Greenock 5th; Open Girls: Southern (Salisbury),

Greenock 2nd; Junior Girls: South West (Port Talbot), Peterhead 7th;

Yole: Southern (Romsey/ Littlehampton), East Kilbride

Overall: Southern, Northern 6th. Boathandling: Pulling: North West (Fleetwood),

Stonehaven 3rd; Sailing: North West (Maryport), Stonehaven 6th;

Power: South West (Birmingham Stirling), Peterhead 2nd;

Overall: North West/South West, Northern 4th. Canoeing:

Open Boys: Northern Ireland, Northern 2nd; Open Girls: South West, Northern

6th; Junior Boys: South West,

Northern 3rd; South West, Junior Girls: Northern 4th;

Overall: South West, Northern 7th.

Overall Regatta Winners: South West, Northern 7th.

Bell Davies Race Winners: Northern Area (Cdr Colin Redstone, Lt Ethel Wilson, S/ Lt Adam Ranklin, Trainee Instructor Adam Simpson, Civilian Instructors Elaine Anderson and Jen Hines).

Certificate presented

MEMBERS of TS Portland were on duty to receive a special certificate from the Royal British Legion.

Cadets from the Winsford, Middlewich and Northwich unit looked on as the chairman of the Winsford branch of the RBL, Mr O'Brian, handed a Certificate of Affiliation to unit Commanding Officer PO John Trangmar.

Those who attended included AC Turner, OC Steele, Lt Lloyd RNR, PO Long, AC Steele and AC Maddocks.



International camp outstanding success'

AN international cadet camp has been hailed as an "outstanding success" by the President of the Royal Naval Association, S/M John McAnally.

The European Naval Cadet summer camp was hosted by the UK at Pier Cellars, a Naval facility near Torpoint, under the International Confederation Maritime (IMC) umbrella.

The event, which is hosted by members of the IMC in rotation, usually takes the form of a sailing camp, but this year the RNA, the link organisation in the UK, decided to attempt something a little more ambitious.

Almost 40 cadets, aged 15-19, from Austria, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Ireland and the UK - represented by Sandbach School CCF and Portrush unit - were given a series of challenges both on and off the water.

There was the expected; sailing an 11m Daler yacht, crewing a 12m powerboat and surfing.

They took dinghies and RiBs as far as Plymouth breakwater, while there was also canoeing in Kingsand Bay. But there was the unexpected as

well - rock climbing on Dartmoor, treetop confidence walks and a visit to the distinctive biomes of the Eden Project.

Visits to Dartmouth and to Devonport, where the cadets toured HMS Portland and a modern submarine, covered the RN dimension, and in the evenings there were inter-team sports, films and a chance to chat.

The weather could have been better - "does it rain every day



 Cadets from the European sailing camp try out surfing (the wave has gone now, lads) and canoeing (above) Pictures: Nigel Huxtable

in England?" was a common question, as there was only one dry day during the camp.

But the sun shone on VIP visitors day, when there was a chance to walk along the coast to Rame Head and later watch a spectacular display on the first night of the Plymouth international firework competition.

S/M McAnally said the groups were picked from across the nations, whereas in the past they have been made up of national blocs, and the wide range of activities ensured there was never

a dull moment.

"There were a large number of leaders, all CCF, RN and ex-RN, and they were a wonderful crowd natural leaders and brilliant at it," said S/M McAnally.

The IMC aims to promote and maintain maritime traditions, safety requirements at sea and to stimulate in youngsters an interest in maritime careers.

And it fell to the RNA to organise the camp, from creating the comprehensive programme of events to personally escorting groups across London from airports to Paddington station. "The camp would not have

been possible without the active co-operation of the RN, which we got in spades," said S/M McAnally. He added that the facility - Pier

Cellars was originally a pilchard fishing port before being taken up by the Navy - was an ideal venue for such a camp.

"The idea was to make it different, and I think that's what I liked most," said RNA General Secretary S/M Paddy McClurg.

"I have a feeling they might ask us to do it again...'

A great day with SS Great **Britain**

CADETS from Cardiff, along with PO Allison Ward and Trainee Instructor Sue Griffiths, have visited SS Great Britain in Bristol.

Their trip to Bristol was something of an adventure in its own right, including trains, river ferries and a ride in one of the Welsh capital's new 'bendy buses'.

Once in Bristol's Historic Dockyard the cadets explored the ship from the keel upwards, comparing first-class and steerage cabins and peering into the hold.

The ship includes a number of vignettes of everyday life aboard the steamship in her heyday, including the birth of a baby, a surgeon conducting an operation, first-class passengers relaxing in the lounges and soldiers tending to their horses on their way to the Crimean War.

During a talk on Victorian etiquette, cadets demonstrated their skills by folding table napkins into the Bishop's Mitre and Rose, much to the delight of the steward conducting the talk.

The Welsh cadets also met Isambard Kingdom Brunel himself - well, that's who he claimed he was, anyway - and the great man answered their questions about the ship which he designed, his life and the fashions of the day.

SS Great Britain was a technological marvel when she was launched in Bristol in 1843.

The 300ft-long ship, which displaced over 3,000 tons, was built with an iron hull and screw propeller, and was powered by a huge 1,000hp steam engine.

Her maiden voyage to the US smashed the existing transatlantic speed record, and by the time she was abandoned in the Falklands in 1937 she had clocked up almost a million miles, many of them on the long voyages between the UK and Australia.

She was salvaged in 1970 and brought back from the South Atlantic to Bristol.

Laura is a trailblazer

EX-LC Laura Church, of the Chelmsford unit, has written her name into the Corps history books by becoming the first winner of the Engineering Achievement Cup.

The trophy was presented to the marine engineering specialisation by Lt Cdr (SCC) Don Briggs RNR on his retirement.

Laura won the cup, to be awarded annually to the Sea Cadets achieving the best grades in the BTEC First Diploma in Engineering (Maintenance) at HMS Gannet, during her work towards a BTEC last year.

Laura, who is now on a work experience programme as an engineer in Devonport, achieved a distinction for her efforts at Gannet.



 Northampton and Wellingborough cadets afloat on the Firth of Forth

of the sea (and harbour, river and lake) OFFSHORE, coastal, estuarine, inland give the cadets of Northampton and

Wellingborough unit a patch of water and they will successfully sail across it.

LC Josh Falconer and AC William Marrable spent a week at sea with the offshore yacht TS Leopold Muller, based in Walton-on-the-Naze.

Apart from having a fantastic time and visiting several ports, the pair achieved RYA Offshore Competent Crew awards and

navigational skills training. Cadets had the choice of two different summer camps this year.

A group of 11 travelled to Portsmouth for a week on board HMS Bristol as part of the Eastern Area camp, taking part in waterborne and land-based activities alike - everything from power boating and pulling to first aid and polishing up their cooking and stewarding skills.

They were joined from cadets from overseas, giving them a great opportunity to make new friends and to sample life on a Royal Navy ship, albeit one which never leaves the jetty.

For the unit summer camp at HMS Caledonia there was a party of 13, who went boating out of Port Edgar under the shadow of the Forth Bridges.

More experienced cadets went on a day sailing trip to achieve their RYA Day sailing module - the first time that the 'boaty' Northampton cadets had completed a day sail and they have really been bitten by the

So great was the impact that a number of cadets are already planning to return to the Firth of Forth for their Duke of Edinburgh Silver expedition next May.

Others in the group tried their hand at boating at sea - very different to their time on the River Nene back home.

As a result they added coastal endorsements to their qualifications in powerboating and dinghy sailing.

The main camps were supplemented by sailing weekends at the regional boating facility at Thrapston, where cadets were also able to improve their windsurfing techniques.

Shoreside activities were just as prominent

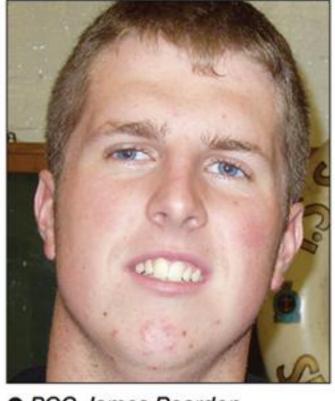
Two of the oldest cadets, POC Chris Ihme and LC Kerry Wilson, attended a course at HMS Nelson to complete their three-year training plan towards achieving their PTI First Class qualification.

This is the first time in 18 years that cadets have achieved this award in the Eastern Area, and this achievement was the last before Chris joined the Royal Navy last month.

Chris, Navy Board Cadet for 2008, said: "The PT was hard work, but all the effort was worth it and put me in a fit condition to join the Royal Navy."

And Wellingborough cadets still managed to find time over a busy summer to move into their new HQ at Rushden.

SEA CADETS



POC James Reardon

It's (nearly) all change at Sutton Coldfield

There is a new look about the management team at Sutton Coldfield where a number of key posts have been up for grabs in the past few months.

In the first part of the year new CO, John Bradley, took over from Gary Truelove - although John has been connected with the unit, as a cadet and staff member, for about 40 years.

Gary, who was at the head of TS Sutton Coldfield for ten years, moved on to a new challenge as District Officer for Warwickshire.

The unit also has a new chairman, a new vice chairman and a new training officer.

But there is no chance of cadets being affected by any disruption the unit remains competitive when up against other units.

A team of Sutton Coldfield cadets recently returned from the National Band Competition at Plymouth, where they finished runners-up, just one point behind the winners.

Unit teams also topped the pile in district regattas for canoeing, boating, drill and piping, and nine out of the 24-strong South West Area winning team in the canoeing and boat-handling competition in the National Combined Regatta came from Sutton Coldfield.

And a member of the unit, POC James Reardon, was chosen to go on an international exchange to Hong Kong in August with three colleagues from other parts of the UK.



RAIDERS in fast boats launched an attack on a coastal installation in Lancashire.

They were due to rendezvous with their mothership in Morecambe Bay when they were spotted by defenders who launched an air strike.

The enemy hit back and a stricken air crew had to be rescued.

But peaceable Lancastrians need not have worried, as the attack was part of a mock exercise - the largest of its kind in the UK - involving air and sea cadets from across the country.

Exercise Safe Return is the brainchild of Sea Cadet officer Lt Tony Smith.

Tony has just completed his

11th annual exercise and, while he claims each year will be his last – he is now 65 years old – one suspects the 2009 event is already being planned.

"As soon as one exercise finishes I make a start on the next one a few weeks later," said Tony. "It takes about a year to put together.

"It's a tremendous amount of

work, but it's very satisfying when it all comes together."

Tony and his team of cadets set up a rescue centre at the Fleetwood Nautical Campus on a balmy summer morning from where the 'good guys' co-ordinated a response to the mock attack.

More than 50 cadets took part in Safe Return, along with adult instructors, and so tireless was Tony in pursuit of realism that he managed to persuade the Forces to contribute seven aircraft.

One of the highlights was when a Nimrod from RAF Kinloss scoured the Bay for raiders, while RN Lynx and Sea King helicopters winched 'survivors' from the patrol boats Blazer and Charger.

The scale and complexity of the exercise is down to Tony's tenacity. The retired teacher has spent the past 20 years working with the air cadets and, latterly, Sea Cadets.

"Over the years I've made a great many contacts and made sure I kept in touch with people," he said.

"I also plan everything very meticulously so that the people I ask for favours don't have to do much work - they know everything has been properly cleared.

"I just think I've been very lucky over the years in getting the assets I have - and I'm very grateful."

He reserves his greatest passion not for the military hardware, however, but for the cadets.

"They are getting experiences they would never get anywhere else," he said.

"I also feel that life should be fun. Going on this exercise will make them feel ten feet tall.

"When they do something like this in the public eye it really switches them on and they raise their performance."

The exercise was the centrepiece of a week-long training course at the Sea Cadet Training Centre at Inskip, near Preston.

Other military assets involved in Safe Return were two Army Air Corps Lynx, an Army Gazelle and Tutor aircraft from Number 10 Air Experience Flight at RAF Woodvale.



Abingdon cadets on board the CNS Almirante Condell

Abingdon cadets join new frigate

CADETS from the Abingdon unit were invited to spend a day with a new Chilean frigate - and learned some of the harsh realities of working at sea.

The Type 23 frigate CNS Almirante Condell - formerly HMS Marlborough - has been undergoing sea trials following her refit in Portsmouth, and was due to undertake a day trip across the Channel.

As the Abingdon unit goes by the name of TS Marlborough - a reflection of their affiliation with the ship in its RN days - it seemed a good idea to invite some of the unit along for the day.

Ten cadets and two members of staff sailed with the ship from Portsmouth on a stormy morning, and the gale-force wind ensured a steady trickle of visitors to the sick bay as mal de mer set in long before the frigate sighted the French coast.

During the ten-hour voyage the cadets were given tours of the ship and shown around the bridge and helicopter, in between bouts of seasickness.

Their return home brought a further problem in that a tugboat scheduled to shepherd the frigate in was not available, and the visitors were facing the prospect

of a rough night at sea. But Capt Cruz, Comandante of the Condell, managed to arrange for a pilot boat to collect the cadets and deliver them ashore at 9pm.

The unit made many friends during the trip, and has promised to keep in contact with the ship and her crew.



Hinckley unit provides the honour guard at the funeral of Lt (SCC) John Mapletoft

Last respects for special friend

MEMBERS of Hinckley unit have bid a sad farewell to one of their longest-serving shipmates, a stalwart officer who has died at

the age of 83. Lt (SCC) John Mapletoft RNR had been with the Leicestershire

unit since 1973, and even in his

later years he rarely missed a parade. The unit was honoured by his family, who asked whether TS Amazon could play a role in the funeral service.

And Hinckley was glad to provide an honour guard and pallbearers for the funeral.

Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Neil Hartwell RNR said of Lt Mapletoft: "John was an inspiration to all the staff and cadets in the unit. "He was one of the last members

of the Sea Cadet Corps who saw

active service in World War 2. "He would keep both cadets and staff entertained with his stories of his wartime exploits, and also his time with Hinckley

Sea Cadets. "John was something very special and will be sadly missed."



MEMBERS of the Altrincham and Sale unit have been thanked for their efforts in providing shoeboxes filled with items for children in West Africa.

Capt Wayne Keble wrote to the cadets as HMS Albion, sailed from Sierra Leone to Gibraltar.

According to Albion's CO: "Sierra Leone was a humbling place, very beautiful with fabulous beaches, but with a lot of poverty, and the country is still recovering from the civil war."

He spoke of the projects in which the ship's company had been involved, from the reconstruction of schools and clinics to repairing facilities such as a chimpanzee sanctuary.

"The shoebox appeal was very successful. We ended up with 500 shoeboxes, and these were donated to six schools," he said.

"They ranged from the Jewel Model Preparatory School, made of sticks but with good educational material, to Paola Community Primary School, with overcrowded mud rooms and precious little in the way of facilities.

"In all the schools the children were extremely grateful for the shoeboxes and we managed to ensure that each child was given their own box."

The Barrow-in-Furness Sea and Marine Cadet Band perform on Plymouth Hoe Barrow prove to be the best

THE Barrow-in-Furness Sea and Marine Cadet Band has won the title of the UK's best traditional Sea Cadet drum and bugle band at the national competition.

This was the first time that TS Sovereign, representing the North West of England, had competed at a national level, taking on bands from four other areas who were experienced regular competitors.

The band delivered a stunning ten-minute marching and musical performance, where they were assessed on dress, deportment, technical ability and level of entertainment for the large audience

amassed on Plymouth Hoe.

The band was led by Drum Major LC Sam Greenway, who proudly wore a new sash, sponsored by the Barrow branch of the Submariners Association and a local businessman, which arrived just before the competition.

Delighted Bandmaster Lt Jason Zaccarini said: "The band went with no expectation other than to compete, deliver an entertaining performance and to learn from the experience of watching and competing against the other bands in the competition.

"The performance that the

cadets delivered was fantastic and they truly are a credit to themselves, their unit and to the town of Barrow.

"To come away as the winners of the UK's best traditional drum and bugle band was an added bonus."

Members of the unit also helped welcomed one of TV's 'Hairy Bikers' back to his home town.

Dave Myers, who with Simon King is currently starring in the BBC series Hairy Bakers, returned to Barrow as he was involved in an arts display at the Forum 28 arts centre, and the cadets were asked to play a fanfare for the occasion.



There were two causes for celebration at the Norwich unit

over the summer. Around 50 family and friends were joined by

cadets at the unit's HQ, TS Lord Nelson, to see the christening

of Jack, the son of First Lieutenant Lt Mark Janner Burgess and

his partner Lynsey (above). The ceremony was performed by Rev

James Mustard, the former ship's chaplain, and following Naval

tradition Jack's name was engraved on the ship's bell, which

was upturned to act as a font. On the admin front, promotions to

higher rank are not ten a penny, so to find three in one month in a

unit is not bad going. Sisters Madie and Georgie Frary were rated

L/Cdt at the unit's Royal Naval Parade, together with S/Lt Sally



'The war was very real'

ON AN early spring day in 2006, VIPs, top brass and a fair smattering journalists and photographers mustered on the standings at RAF Cottesmore.

Tagged on the end of a charming Rutland village, the base is the archetypal inter-war airfield with its red-brick buildings and huge hangars.

Today it would witness an historic event. RAF 3(F) Squadron would decommission their Harriers and take charge of their new 'bird', the Eurofighter Typhoon.

That was what the bigwigs and press had come to see - most of them at any rate. But after the RAF had enjoyed its moment in the sun, the Fleet Air Arm stepped up to the mark.

It too would recommission that day with 'new' aircraft, Harriers, yes, but not the fighter with its distinctive black nose cone, instead one with a rather elongated front end. Thus began a new era in naval aviation - the days of air defence were past, the days of close air support dawning.

It was a dawn not necessarily welcomed. The demise of the Sea Harrier was - and remains in many circles - a controversial subject, but it could have been so much worse.

With the fighter's days numbered, the Navy pumped money into the RAF Harrier programme rather than try to extend the life of the FAA jump jet. It was, believes Cdr Adrian 'Ade' Orchard, first commander of the newly re-formed 800 Naval Air Squadron, the right decision.

"If the Royal Navy hadn't taken this route, the retirement of the FA2 wouldn't have merely marked the end of an era, but could also have spelt the end of naval fixedwing aviation."

Ade Orchard was among the first Sea Harrier men to cross to the 'dark side' and fly the RAF's bomber variant, flying missions over Iraq during the 2003 campaign. It was, he says, "a defining moment in my flying career".

He continues: "I suddenly realised that with the right gear and even then I believed that the GR7 was the right gear - your effectiveness on the battlefield was just immense."

So the king is dead, long live the

The new king had a new domain, no longer the endless expanse of the ocean, but the mountains and steppe of Afghanistan.

In the autumn of 2006, Orchard led his naval air squadron into the line of fire over Kandahar and Helmand.

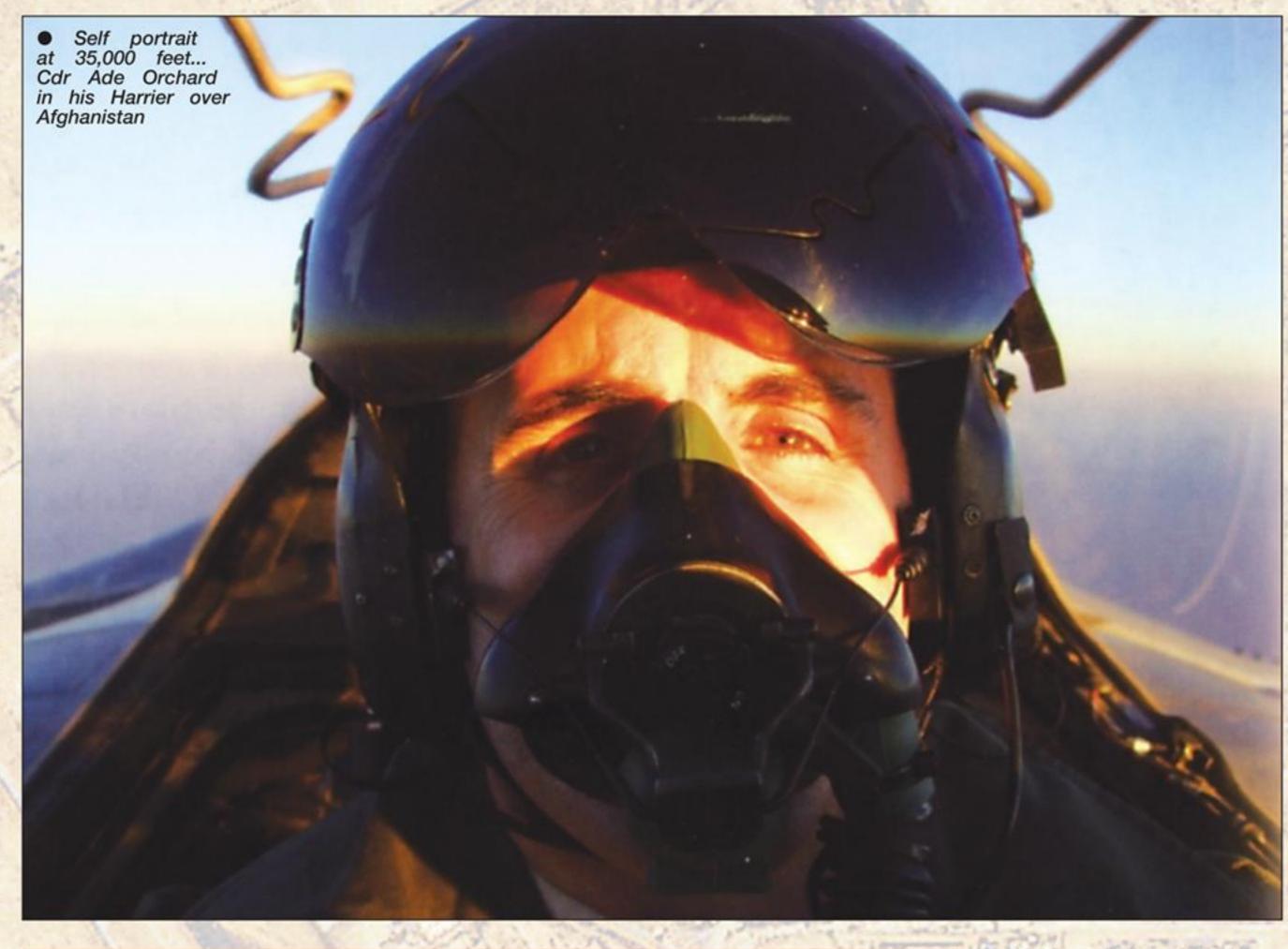
It marked the end of a long road as Sea Harrier pilots and Sea Harrier engineers became 'plain' Harrier pilots and Harrier engineers with the GR7, the Royal Air Force's bomber model of the fabled jump jet.

And to understand the GR7 meant spending time with the RAF. A lot of time.

There is, as you'd expect, plenty of banter with the Crabs as they are the other half of Joint Force Harrier.

The Crabs steadfastly stick to RAF banter, even at sea: officers' mess (wardroom), boat (ship), bed (bunk). And as for the cabins aboard our Harrier carriers, well as one squadron leader fumed, "Luckily I haven't brought a cat with me because there was sodall room to swing one." (He has a

point - Ed.)



With the Naval Strike Wing back in Afghanistan, the first Fleet Air Arm Harrier pilot to lead his fliers in Kandahar, Cdr Adrian Orchard, has charted that groundbreaking deployment in Joint Force Harrier: The Inside Story of a Royal Navy Fighter Squadron at War (Penguin, £16.99 ISBN 978-0-178-15399-1)

remain proud of their heritage and their distinctly different ways of working - and matelots no more enjoyed extended periods in the presence of the Crabs than vice versa. "If I'd wanted to work for this length of time with the RAF, I'd have joined the bloody RAF," one chief complained.

Ade Orchard understands such sentiments - but he also lives in the real world.

"People just had to accept that despite the apparent separation into light and dark blue, all Harrier pilots were now part of a joint force. For some, that was a bitter pill to swallow."

There were bigger issues than RAF/RN rivalry at stake - the lives of Allied troops on the ground in Afghanistan for a start.

RN jets hadn't been

involved in a campaign like Afghanistan since Suez half a century before. The work-up they had alongside the Air Force proved invaluable, but heading to Kandahar Orchard knew that he and his men were under a great deal of pressure to

"Any unit deploying to the front line for the first time is under the spotlight," he writes. "Our performance would be closely scrutinised."

deliver the goods.

And no man or woman in 800 NAS heading to Helmand underestimated their foe. The Taleban are not "just a bunch of religious nutters wearing outdoor pyjamas and black turbans, waving copies of the Koran and carrying Kalashnikovs". They are warriors, Orchard observes, with Banter aside the two Services no "apparent fear of death - they

just don't give up".

That does not, of course, mean that they cannot be killed.

Whenever pinned down by insurgents, Allied troops would call for air support to suppress the enemy - which invariably meant 800 NAS.

This is not a tale of gung-ho pilots wanting to lay waste to great tracts of Afghanistan. These are not men who "love the smell of napalm in the morning". Often, a loud 'boo' would suffice.

"Sometimes," Cdr Orchard says

succinctly, "it was just a question of scaring them shitless." And that meant "a low-level

show of force", roaring over

runs

the enemy taking potshots at the

jets. Otherwise, however, the

"Contrary to both popular

belief and the images so dear to

Hollywood, the world does not

rush past in a blur when you're

the author points out.

the number of animals."

flying an aircraft fast at low level,"

hanging on lines, kids running

around, the locals doing what

they're up to, and almost count

"We can see rugs and washing

pose particular dangers,

chiefly the terrain, sometimes

experience was rather surreal.

Taleban

Low-level

As it turned out, there positions.

Over one Taleban position, Orchard unleashed a 540lb 'air burst' bomb - it blows up above the target.

followed by a 'bite'

"As the shockwave spread out at the speed of sound, the fireball sucked in the air from the surrounding sky," the Harrier pilot observed.

And then it seemed that the enemy was striking back, firing ground-to-air missiles at the passing jets. Orchard's RPM gauge "spun like the wheels of a fruit machine" as his jet powered away from the danger zone, decoy flares spinning out of the belly of the Harrier.

were no enemy

missiles

- Orchard's bomb had

malfunctioned and detonated

It could have brought down the

jet; it could also have exploded

over the Allied troops by accident.

It didn't. It killed six out of seven

insurgents who had been pinning

between ground controllers and

fliers: 'Your BDA is six KIA.' Your

battle damage assessment is six killed

War to Fleet Street and the

news editors in the ivory towers

Or, in the clipped chatter

down the friendly forces.

prematurely.

in action.

And sometimes a 'bark' must be of 24-hour news channels is black

than black and white. It doesn't take place in the safety of a London office, where mistakes can be eliminated with the click of a mouse button or hitting the 'delete' key.

and white and 'friendly fire' is an

Except that war is more grey

easily-avoidable blunder.

War is a melting pot of fear, terror, anxiety, relief, exhilaration, life-and-death decisions in the blink of an eye. It is rarely clear-

On a night flight over Kandahar, Ade Orchard and his wingman escorted a ground convoy through the darkness.

The troops were becoming increasingly agitated. They spoke in increasingly clipped tones on the radio, convinced their slowmoving column would be attacked

by a suicide bomber. A truck zig-zagged through one of Afghanistan's towns. The naval aviators called it in. The troops took up position and threw down a wall of fire in front of the vehicle, which quickly turned around and scarpered.

"It might have been the suicide bomber,' Ade Orchard observed from above, "or perhaps it really was just a lost delivery driver who would at the very least have needed to go home and change his trousers." On the other side of town,

the fliers spied something burning, a disc rotating wildly, in flames. They dropped down for a closer inspection.

"It looks like somebody swinging a burning tyre round on the end of a rope," Orchard radioed.

It was. The locals were celebrating Eid, the festival at the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

"It was just another reminder to all of us that just because a bloody war was being fought in the country, life for most of the locals carried on pretty much as normal."

This is the reality of Helmand for men in the air and men on the ground. The innocent can appear suspicious, the suspicious innocent. A crowd of people gathering might be the insurgents massing for an attack... or locals visiting the village market.

Tales of aerial combat, dogfights and the like, are often rather duller on paper than they are in the skies. "I shot down this plane, then I shot down another..."

Joint Force Harrier is as much unit history as it is memoir; it's about all the men and women who headed to Kandahar.

And that is a good thing. For not only does it show that it takes a real team effort to support the handful of 'aces', but it also allows for some good dits (or anecdotes if you prefer Crab speak) on the ground, as well as in the skies.

Despite all that talk of jointery, the naval fliers quickly gave their base a nautical flavour. The Battle Ensign was raised, a blast wall adorned with a rather large White Ensign and Harrier, a warning sign posted on the ops room door - 'Do not enter, here be sea dragons', and (best of all), a mock carrier -HMS Kandahar - erected in front of an air shelter, complete with ski

Such refinements weren't the only taste of home: the British galley served up "good old British fare" - chicken tikka masala, treacle sponge, spotted dick and jam roly-poly. (The American diner, by contrast, offered less wholesome fare, chiefly out of a freezer, and always accompanied by 'freedom fries' - chips.)

Kandahar offers a few mod cons - Burger King and Subway fast food stores and a string of coffee shops (operating out of containers) - and daily dangers, courtesy of Taleban rocket attacks. The ground crews were in the front line every bit as much as the pilots.

These barrages also created extra work for the naval aviators, for after each attack the runway and dispersal areas were littered with shrapnel which had to be cleared by the FOD plod.

And for all the technology, for all the guided missiles and lasertargeting, the night vision goggles, the jet engines, many things have remained unchanged since the first naval aviators earned their wings a century ago.

"No matter how hard anyone trained or practised, the thought that on every sortie there was a good chance that your actions would result in the deaths of maybe dozens of human beings in a split second was sobering in the extreme," writes Orchard.

"For every single person in the squadron, the war in Afghanistan was very real."

Proceeds from Joint Force Harrier will be split between the Forces charity Combat Stress and the Royal Navy Historic Flight

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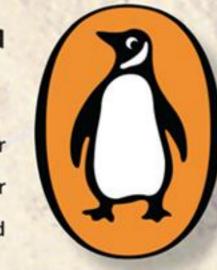
Win Joint Force Harrier

WE have ten copies of Joint Force Harrier to give away thanks to those nice chaps and chapesses at Penguin books. To be in with a chance of winning, name the naval air station which was the home of the Sea Harrier for more than a quarter

Send your answer to Joint Force Harrier Competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH, or email it (with your contact details) to jointforceharrier@navynews.co.uk

We must receive your entry by mid-day on Monday November 10 2008. Normal Navy News competition rules apply and

the editor's decision is final.







LNN Lucy Norman (pictured above) stepped up a notch to take part in one of the UK's most gruelling endurance events – the Ironman.

Lucy, a psychiatric nurse at the community mental health department in Portsmouth Naval Base, is already an accomplished athlete in the RN's triathlon and cycling teams.

Ironman is a 'super triathlon' – 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride ending with running a marathon.

Some 1,600 competitors gathered in the Dorset town of Sherborne for the 2008 championships; the leading hand took part principally to raise money for numerous charities (Leukaemia Research, air ambulance, MacMillan Cancer Relief, and youth/sports projects in the UK).

But the 29-year-old also posted some impressive times (1h 13m 01s in the water, 6h 39m 1s on the bike and 4h 5m 6s for the marathon) which gave her 350th place overall and sixth place in her age group.

Your RNFA needs you

THE new **football** season is now well underway and the first month or so has been spent with RN team managers looking to develop their squads.

Of course, RN/RM teams of all standards will be optimistically looking forward to success and we really hope that everyone enjoys the coming season.

The senior team's first game of the season will be a friendly against the Civil Service at Burnaby Road on October 22. Lastly in this general introduction, if there are any budding journalists out there with an interest in Navy football, I am looking for some help with RNFA Comms work – nothing too onerous, and there are perks to the job. Please ring me on 01225 467543.

In addition to the area trials held during September, the current Royal Navy U23 and U18 football coaches are always on the lookout for players with the ability, attitude and commitment to represent the RN at these age groups.

The U23s play throughout the season against opposition such as England Schools, culminating in the Inter-Services versus the Army and RAF.

The U18s play in the South East Counties Cup and the Dallas Cup (Texas, USA) in April; to be eligible to play for the U18s you must have been born after August 1 1989.

Details from WO1 Steve Rule 93825 2510 or Lt Cdr John Gordon 93825 5105 for the U23; CPO Fraser Quirke 9380 25552 and CPO Paul Willetts 9380 25871 for the U18s.

During the close season, HMS Westminster paid a short visit to Chennai (formerly Madras), when members of the ship's football

team helped out at a local orphanage.

Balagurukulam Orphanage provides abandoned and deprived children with adequate shelter, food, medical facilities and

The care and attention given to the children by the hardworking staff was plainly evident to the team, who felt privileged to be

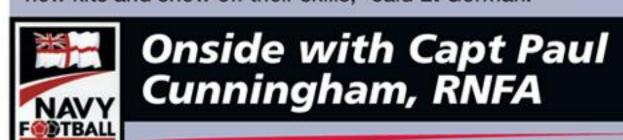
able to help out for the afternoon.

The Westminster team, led by Lt Glenn Gorman and CPO(MEM)

'Snakey' Blake, handed out new England football kits provided by

the FA and RNFA and their Defence Diplomacy programme.

Every child was given a shirt and a football, along with sweets and school equipment. "The children were eager to get into their new kits and show off their skills," said Lt Gorman.



Fights, food and fun

PUGILISTS past and present will gather in Pompey next year for an evening of fine food and top boxing.

Members of the RN and RM Ex-Boxers Association – 120 strong – have lined up a reunion at South Parade Pier. It will take the form of a boxing dinner with today's Navy and Royal Marine boxers taking on as yet undetermined opposition.

undetermined opposition.

The association is formed

from sailors and Royal Marines who've boxed for the Service at representative level and includes national, international, Commonwealth and Olympic veterans.

The 2009 reunion takes place on Friday March 27.

Details are available from ex-CPO Tony Bevel, former RN coach and now association treasurer, on 01489 880472 or 0750 005 8801.



• Go ahead, make my day... A competitor takes aim during the final day at Bisley

Pictures: LA(Phot) Alex Cave, FRPU East

Shoot to thrill

CORPORAL Jim Bloom is the ultimate marksman in the Senior Service – as he demonstrated in front of a clutch of senior military and defence figures.

The final day of the prestigious tri-Service Combat Shooting Competition at Bisley saw the top shots in the Forces aiming to take home the Queen's Medal, including the green beret.

It marked the climax of eight days of first-rate marksmanship at the home of shooting, which saw all participants challenged under conditions that any sailor would find it hard to experience elsewhere.

A training week preceded the competition, the event proper saw each command team of 12 competing for 13 trophies, while there were 19 individual titles up for grabs including the coveted Queen's Medal (a signal was sent out last month with a full list of winners).

The latter medal is awarded to one member from each of the three Services under the Queen's Warrant and is the only military medal awarded for a military skillset.

Having shown a special interest in the work of the RNRM Rifle Association over the past year, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band was keen to witness the strides made in combat shooting.

He wasn't the only one: other



 Bloom with a view... Cpl Jim Bloom, top marksman in the Senior Service, is honoured by comrades

VIPs included Shadow Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox, head of the Army General Sir Richard Dannatt, Chief of Staff (Capability) Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, Deputy FOST Cdre Nick Lambert, Head of the Maritime Warfare School Cdre Steve Kirby, Commanding Officer of RNAS Yeovilton Cdre Chris Palmer, and finally the association's honorary vice president David Gosling.

All the VIPs received a briefing on the RNRMRA's year so far, and a progress report on the implementation of Chief-of-Staff (Capability)'s marksmanship directive.

They then witnessed the tri-Service final and met the most important element of the competition – the sailors and marines.

The business of advanced combat shooting is primarily managed by the RNRM Rifle Association on behalf of Fleet with the principal objective of delivering advanced marksmanship training with the 5.56 (or SA80 in more common parlance) and 9mm pistol to the RN and the Corps.

"The association continues to ensure that its events, exercises and competitions are focused on improving an individual's skills in the use of small arms, and advancing their marksmanship," explained Lt Liam 'Dickie' Byrd (HMS Gloucester).

"That helps to maintain and improve operational capability at the grassroots level."

2008 has been a busy year for the association, but there is yet more to come.

Under the Chief-of-Staff (Capability)'s newly-released marksmanship directive, the Association now has a reinvigorated plan for the future of advanced combat shooting training.

This directive also saw the recent establishment of the much needed RN Marksmanship Training Team (RNMTT) who have worked closely with the association to deliver the required training to the Senior Service.

The focus has already switched to the 2009 shooting season and the support required from all COs to make a success of the various levels of free combat shooting training offered by the RNRMRA to all Fleet units.

The Area Skill-at-Arms Meeting (SAAM) competition signals will be distributed in due course, explaining how ships, unit and establishment teams can enter.

More details from www. rnrmra.org, or from Lt Byrd on corporate@RNRMRA.org.

Branches blossom in rain

THE RN Hockey Association's centenary season opened in fine style, with a Navy-wide, seven-a-side, mixed inter-branch competition, writes Capt Mark Darlington.

Building on the success of last year's inaugural tournament, this year's event brought together more than 150 men and women in 15 teams from across the Naval Service to battle it out in defence of their specialisation or branch.

Despite the torrential rain at HMSTemeraire, the fighting spirit of the players remained undiminished.

The contest began with a closely-fought match between the RN and the management consultancy group KPMG, who had kindly agreed to sponsor the event.

The game was played between two mixed sides with the Navy fielding a well-balanced team with a blend of youth and experience under the watchful eye of Lt Matty Wesson.

This was the first time that many players had represented the RN in a mixed game, with each side comprising six men and five women.

The Senior Service side included husband and wife team Lts Adam and Karen Duke, L/Cpl Tom Nicoll (RMR Bristol), S/Lt Marian Taylor (Observer under training Culdrose), PO (UW) Micky Warriner (St Albans), the newlymarried LNN Simon Domoney (MDHUP),

and POMEA Stuie McInally (Turbulent) amongst others.

In a quickfire opening 15 minutes, the Navy soon went ahead 1-0 as good teamwork and true grit and determination helped the RN counter the fine individual skills of many of the KPMG players.

The RN eventually won 3-2 on the day, but this was less important than the fun and enjoyment that everyone got from a game played in just the right spirit.

RNHA secretary Lt Cdr Alan Walker said: "The game against KPMG was a splendid way to begin the weekend. It was great to host a team the RN have not played before and to show them a little of what life in a blue suit, or under a green lid, has to offer."

Two days of hockey followed in which nearly all the 32 specialisations and branches of the Naval Service were represented – including full team entries from the dentists, PTIs, QARNNS, Doctors and MA/Ms, Greenies and Clankies

and Clankies.

There was also a mix of two warfare teams drawing upon five different sub-

specialisations.

The Royal Marines and the Fleet Air Arm were all represented, and the submariners fielded a SM Southwest team and a SM

Northwest team, both of whom ended up amongst the prizes, split by a talented WE/QARNNS combo.

Most welcome were a visiting team of Canadians, currently on course at HMS Sultan – hell-bent on having a party, and on showing the Brits what hockey is really all about.

Led by WO Scott Hill, the stars of the show were the logistics specialisations. Combined, they could have fielded chefs, writers, SAs and stewards sides. Instead, they chose to answer the numerous calls to help other teams field full strength sides – "just like when you go to war, everyone needed the loggies," beamed Navy Vets star Cdr Heber Ackland.

CPO Jakie Foran added: "Despite the rain, this was a terrific start to the year, and a great way to promote grass-roots hockey within the Royal Navy. It was fabulous to see so many different teams represented."

For their achievements on and off the field of play, fighting spirit awards, complete with a dash of Nelson's Blood were awarded to Lee Aitken, Karen Duke, Marian Taylor, Jakie Foran, Scott Hill, Marc Dowling, Kelly Urmston and the whole Canadian Navy team.

Looking ahead, there's a black tie centenary ball on June 5 at HMS Nelson – a family affair, open to all RNHA (past and present).

SPORT -

Engineering a victory on the greens

PLANNING complete and the August rain having abated, competitors in the 15th annual RN Engineers golf championship awoke to grey skies but with the hope of a dry day.

For the first time in the contest's history the engineers moved to the spectacular course at Elfordleigh Hotel, just three miles from Plymouth city centre.

The rambling pink hotel provided a fantastic backdrop to spectacular views across the course.

Following a 7.30am start, a closely-fought battle ensued over two rounds with the hand-mown greens and lunchtime pin changes proving to be the undoing of many in the field.

Lt Steve Trotman, off five, played some magnificent golf in the increasing wind, carding gross 76 during the morning medal round and a highly creditable 34 points off a handicap in the afternoon.

For later players, the conditions became more difficult as temperatures dropped and heavy rain was carried by the now strong wind.

WO2 Yorkie Glover pushed Lt Trotman all the way but fell short after being one back at lunch and carding 32 points in the afternoon

Congratulations also to Tam Snaddon of BAE who took the champion sponsor trophy.

2009 will see CPOET(WE)
Steve King take the reins
from this year's organiser,
CPOET(ME) Nobby Styles, and
plans are already in motion to
move away from the Plymouth
area, with Bristol firmly on the
2009 committee's radar. More
details at www.engineersopen.
co.uk.

Meanwhile, the China Fleet Country Club in Saltash hosts the Field Gunners Command 100 Golf Classic – the second year the contest has been run (the 'Oggies' lifted the trophy in its inaugural year).

This year's event takes place on Friday October 31. Details from Fred Pearce on 01752 202860 or freddiepearce@blueyonder. co.uk

And finally... the Royal British Legion is staging its inaugural Combined Services veterans golf contest at Machynys, near Llanelli, in south Wales.

Details of the July 24 event from rikoshea_10@yahoo.co.uk

Horse course for free

SAILORS and marines who fancy a flutter can enjoy a free day out on the final meeting of the flat season at Newbury races.

The racecourse is devoting Saturday October 25 to the military via an 'Armed Forces race day'.

Tickets to the course are limited to two per person. You must book in advance by October 17 on 01635 40015.

Various half-price hospitality deals, plus a suite for injured personal, are also available. Details on the same number.

Officers enjoy Skyy larking

Continued from back page halves", "the boys did good", "Harry will be sick as a parrot", and "you don't win the title in August".

In the post-match summary, the England manager was discussed and the lack of spine of the Arsenal squad, although the presence of too many Ghanaians in England – specifically Michael Essien – had the off-camera staff booing.

So, at the end of the day, it was less a case of Hansen and Lawrenson than Morecambe and Wise starring in Carry on Commentating...



Super Tubes days

SURFERS from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines risked all for perfection at the tip of the African continent.

Despite it being one of the most great white shark-infested regions on the planet, the fear of attack was not enough to keep the surfers from riding one of the world's premier waves.

Nine members of the RN and RM Surfing Association travelled to the foot of Africa for ten days in Jeffrey's Bay in the Eastern Province of South Africa.

'JBay', as it's known, is renowned for being one of the fastest, longest and consistently perfect wave locations in the world and was due to host the world's finest professional surfers in competition only a week after the Navy group left for home.

Before the world's finest could ride the Indian Ocean offerings, the equally enthusiastic (if not as talented) RN boardriders had their fill.

In what were some of the best waves that most of the the group had ever seen, let alone ridden, the performance levels of the group were pushed to the top limit of their abilities.

Tour organiser Sgt Andy Williams (CTCRM) said: "We walked straight into a new swell and perfect conditions, which even the locals claimed was the best day they'd had in weeks, so the trip began on a high.

"The length of the waves, the power, and the sheer speed are something we rarely get in the UK and this perfection is something you can only get at JBay. So this was a fantastic opportunity for the guys to push their surfing in world-class waves."

The boardriders not only tested themselves against the waves, but also the area's top longboard surfers in competition.

Association at Noordhoek Beach near Port Elizabeth, the contest was a challenge of the abilities of the tour members against the very high standard of surfing in South Africa, which is among the top five surfing nations along with Australia, the USA and Brazil.

In what were fun waves for the event, the British boardriders put up a good fight against topclass opposition. Although none of the team reached the finals, good performances saw fifth-place finishes from WO1 Paul Keenan and CPO Steve Hicks in the over 35s division and LA(Phot) Gaz Faulkner in the U35s.

The team also donated many prizes for the event in the form of highly-sought-after boardrider jackets, T-shirts and caps.

It was a highly-successful meeting between the two clubs with great generosity and hospitality



• Flawless Lawless... CPO Matt Lawless "taking on a fast one at Super Tubes" (or that's what it says in the accompanying caption...)

shown by the South Africans and an invitation, from David Lipschitz, president of the South African Longboard Association, to a future event.

"It was a pleasure to host the guys from the British Navy, the waves could have been slightly better for the event but they were more than contestable," said Mr Lipschitz. "We would love to see the RNRM team out in the water again – with the possibility of a larger, national event next time they visit."

On the squad's return to Jeffrey's Bay for the final week, the perfect waves kept coming, with the team enjoying the amazing natural wonders of Africa.

When not dodging pods of dolphins or surfing with them on the waves, they were watching whales breach out to sea from their beachside balcony.

One natural wonder they were not keen to witness however were the fish – big fish like great whites.

Ask any locals if there were sharks, the answer was always 'yes'. Despite tales of people being 'bumped' in the water only days before the Brits' arrival, the prospect of perfect waves was too much to keep the surfers out.

Fortunately no sightings were made of the toothy predators – although there were plenty of cuts and abrasions incurred from colliding with the reef – so the surfers could concentrate on the waves alone, even with the Jaws soundtrack sounding in their ears.

South Africa 2008 will go down as one of the most successful tours the RNRM surfers have made, joining Hawaii, France and San Diego as destinations the team has

The tours not only provide the opportunity for the members to push their abilities in world-class surf but also provide a reward for those who donate free time to hosting numerous beginner surfing weekends throughout the year for Royal Navy/Marine personnel and their families.

More details on the sport can be found at surfnavy.com

Archers see off Air Force challenge

THE Royal Navy South Coast Archers hosted the national record status tournament on a windy, overcast day at HMS Collingwood.

The RAF have dominated archery in the 21st Century, winning six out of the past seven titles, including the 2007 event at Cranwell.

The Navy, however, were fielding the strongest side in years – two former and one current RN champion and one former GB squad member who narrowly missed out on an Olympics place.

The round shot was a 'York': six dozen arrows at 100 yards, four dozen at 80 yards and two dozen at 60 yards (or 80, 60, 50 yds for women, the same number of arrows, called a 'Hereford').

The Navy team – Lt Jonathan Parker (Raleigh), Mne Seb York (CTCRM, King's Troop), CPO Barry Green (Ark Royal) and Capt Gareth Knowles RM (CTCRM) – won comfortably.

The RN Recurve championships were decided in the same order: Lt Parker, Mne York, CPO Green and Capt Knowles.

In the association competition, the RAF won but in the Compound Division, the Senior Service overcame the Air Force by 20 points.

It might sound an emphatic triumph, but it was actually less than one per cent of the total points scored.

The association team comprised Mel Sandford, Cdr Ian Harrop RN (Fleet HQ) and Ian Cooper, while CPO Darren Bennion (SFM Devonport) and S/Lt Nick Hepworth (Collingwood) formed the compound team.

Individual, Senior Service champions were: gents recurve: Lt Parker; gents compound: CPO Bennion; gents longbow Mid Tom Goodwin (Typhoon Sqn, Loughborough University); gents barebow: Ian Cooper; ladies recurve: Mel Sandford.

Bags of power

ONE sport which has never appeared in these pages before is **powerbag lifting**.

Until now. RN and RM PTIs are looking for strapping Senior Servicemen and women to uphold the honour of the Corps/Fleet against the Army and RAF.

For the uninitiated powerbag lifting involves lifting powerbags (obviously – Ed) – five pairs of powerbags (think elongated, heavy bean bags) weighing between 10kg and 30kg.

These are placed at fivemetre increments from the back of a Land Rover.

Competitors set off from the back of the 4x4, carrying one powerbag at a time, loading it on to the vehicle.

Oops. Almost forgot. Several million people will be watching vou.

The contest is filmed by Sky Sports' popular Soccer AM show and runs for the duration of its 42-week series.

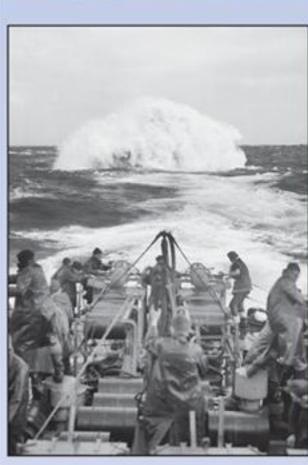
Personnel wishing to take part in this event should seek chain of command approval.

Once that is received, contact Tom Oliver at Sky Sports on 0207 805 739 or tom. oliver@bskyb.com

You will be competing in your own time and Sky will be providing insurance cover should an injury occur. Personnel should also confirm their own personal insurance to ensure adequate cover.

The RN PR team in Whitehall

– DPR (RN) – are looking to
provide suitably branded
T-shirts for competitors. Once
selected by Soccer AM, chosen
individuals should contact Maj
Mark Perrin on 9621 82861.



They went unseen tapping the vast archive of 20th Century naval images



Kent Kong continuing the frigate's Far East odyssey

Plus

Quake 'n' evac - no stroll in the park for reservists







Top shot... the leading RN athlete of the season, LOM Andy Dawkins, delivers another powerful performance

Pictures: LA(Phot) Brett Turner, FRPU East

A high-class field

NAVY athletes could not quite match last year's achievements - but many still delivered high-class performances at the 2008 Inter-Services track and field championships.

Eighteen medallists from the past three years were unavailable because of other commitments – providing opportunities for fresh talent to sample the competition hosted by the RN at Victory Stadium, writes team manager Paul Winton.

The top performing Senior Service athlete of 2008 was LOM Andy

Dawkins (Neptune).

Commitment and dedication to a challenging and structured training regime enabled him to improve personal best performances in shot, discus and hammer. Regularly throwing the shot over 15m (49ft) he improved his personal best to 15.98m (52ft) and was invited to compete at the GB Olympic trials where he finished ninth. For the second year in succession he gained two medals at the Inter-Services level, a silver in the shot and a bronze in the hammer.

The best performance from sportswomen at the Inter-Services came courtesy of Lt Linda Lawrence (JSU Northwood), another athlete rewarded for steely determination and adherence to a dedicated training regime. She won bronze medals over both 800m and 1,500m, characterised by her strong finishing sprints to get into those medal positions.

POPT Neal Edwards (Raleigh) has made a habit of top-three finishes in the 400m hurdles over the past eight years. He's also benefited from a focused training regime - and he's also aided development of fellow athletes as the RN coach.

He set a fine example in the opening track event to finish second with a season's best time in a high-quality 400m hurdles.

LPT Jim Buttle (Collingwood) has been involved with Senior Service athletics since he first joined the RN nearly ten years ago. During that time he's competed in a wide range of events including sprints, jumps, middle-distance and endurance races.

His natural aptitude has always been with the jumps and whilst he may consider his best event to be long jump he won a bronze in the high jump. Has Jim ever considered a decathlon?

For the first time in living memory the Royal Navy had an Olympic medallist in the team, albeit carrying an injury.

Logs Fidelis Gadzama (Nelson) won a silver medal representing Nigeria in the 4x 400m relay at the 2000 games in Sydney.

The former African junior champion and Commonwealth Games medallist was keen for another Olympic opportunity and arrived at this year's Nigerian Olympic trials with a season's best time of 46.8 seconds, which looked good enough to at least get him into the relay squad.

Unfortunately, he was injured in the trials and so he refocused his efforts on representing the RN at the Inter-Services.

Embarking upon an intensive course of treatment that allowed him to run in the 100m, he limped across the line in a blanket finish with the realisation that the 2009 season would be his next opportunity to compete.

Other RN team members finished just outside the medals in a wide range of events. Fourth-place finishes can be the

worst of all - but they can also provide the motivation to train and achieve better levels of performance in the future.

In the women's team, AB Kenisha Asquith (Nelson) ran well to finish fourth in the 100m and 200m, just missing a medal in the latter by a very small margin.

LLogs Rhian Hanson (Richmond), recently returned from deployment, finished fourth in the discus and shot and will hope to add to her

previous medal tally next year. Lt Victoria Southern (Lancaster) came home from deployment just five days before the event and took fourth place in both the javelin and 400m hurdles, an unusual mix of events. Victoria has previously won

bronze in both sports. Multi-eventer Lt Cdr Carolyn Lucocq (RAF Uxbridge) has previously tasted success in the heptathlon and many individual events, but this year came fourth in the long jump. Musn Kiri Wedlock (RMSM) could

not quite match her 1,500m silver of 2007 as she moved up a distance to finish fourth in the 5,000m. Among the men, LWEA Mike O'Neill (Sutherland) finished fourth in the triple jump for the second year in succession. Logs Jackson

Simatei (also Sutherland) displayed a very strong arm, for a former Kenyan steeplechaser, in the javelin, where 17-yearold ET(ME) Joe Andrews (Sultan) also competed as the youngest member of the Royal Navy team. MA Glenn Long (CTCRM) displayed strong moral courage competing in the 800m, recovering from illness that disrupted his training, to deliver his usual level of commitment towards the team effort.

> Earlier in the season Mne Glyn Fuller (11 ATT Sqn) won the RN decathlon title as he finished a strong seventh in the Inter-Services championships, achieving an excellent 3.6m in the pole vault along the way - not bad after a long absence from the event.

AB Michelle Pinion (Northumberland) was the top RN heptathlete, overcoming S/Lt Ellie Berry (also Northumberland) in a closelyfought contest.

Next year presents a significant challenge for the RN team to achieve success at the Inter-Services level; much will depend on the availability and commitment of athletes returning from sea and operational

The men will compete in the Southern Men's League Division 3 in 2009 with the potential to win promotion in the five-match season.

Although 2008 has proved to be a difficult year to field teams strong in depth and numbers, several strong individual performances were posted.

The final match at Guildford was memorable for more than the torrential rain showers throughout the day, notably for the 4m 38s time posted by Lt Cdr Graeme Riley (most recently HMS Turbulent) on his final day in the Service.

Although this time remains 46 secs slower than his best, it was an excellent time for a veteran athlete in his age group. Graeme left the Service as the Royal Navy's long-standing 3,000m steeplechase record holder (9m 00.1s). Will we see his like again?

Sprinter L/Cpl Kunle Atiba powers towards the finish line



Officers enjoy **Skyy larking**

WHEN Lt Greg Young and Lt Cdr Andrew Mills were dispatched to Ghana with the Mobile News Team to cover HMS Endurance's visit (see page 8) they were prepared for appearing in front of the camera.

Experts in the RN's global role and Endurance's environmental mission, they could cope with any question from journalists... except, perhaps, "What will Harry Redknapp be saying to his players at half time?"

But somehow the duo ended up as Premier League football 'pundits' on national TV.

It all began when local media visited the survey ship and the pair chatted with Ghanaian TV presenter Toni Boateng.

Greg happened to mention that he was a Pompey fan, while Andy said he'd lived in Manchester for a few years.

This prompted Toni to invite the duo to visit the studios of Skyy (not Sky) TV to watch Pompey vs Manchester United live – too good an opportunity to pass up, so accept they did.

The officers were escorted to the studio, ushered to the presenter's desk, and introduced to 'Ossie', the host, in full view of the cameras.

Then the gravity of the situation hit the pair: the Ghanaian Gary Lineker had decided to use them as his pundits, live on TV.

Ever the skilled media operators, they continued with their insightful comments on the past, present and future of the Premier League, holding back fits of laughter every time the host referred to one or other by the wrong name.

The live build-up came to a conclusion and eventually the game began, linked by satellite from South Africa... on to a 14in portable TV with the worst signal reception imaginable - so bad, in fact, that it looked like it was snowing at Fratton Park in August.

Bad though the image was (the ball itself was invisible) it was about to get a whole lot worse as the satellite feed from South Africa was lost and the TV station reverted to the Ghanaian equivalent of the test card.

Just as the first half came to end, the signal was regained and (horror of horrors) United were 1-0 up.

Seconds later, Ossie was back live: "Greg, 1-0 to Manchester United. What will Harry Redknapp be saying to his players at half time?" He then turned to Andy: "Fletcher scored in the 18th minute. How did the goal affect the rest of the half?"

"Never have two Royal Navy officers cuffed, bluffed and serenely waffled through 15 minutes of the most misinformed half-time summary, given with confidence, knowledge and balance," said Andy.

The pair also had a secret plan to mention as many ship's names in commentary as possible.

There were easy ones - "plenty of Talent in the team," "Superb striker of the ball", "Tireless worker", "Needing a moraleboosting Victory" and even the Motson inspired "His mother was born in Cattistock" were skilfully slipped in.

Greg then masterfully added the obvious "They are known for their late-season Endurance," while Andy chipped in with "There was an Ocean of class between these two Illustrious and Astute teams."

Unlike true pundits, the pair managed to avoid those muchlampooned football clichés: "A game of one and a quarter Continued on page 47

deployments.

OB WOOLMER